



Geometrica, by Matt Pierard 2021

Two o' them Talking

By Ferenc Molnar

Translated from the Hungarian by Joseph Szebenyei
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TWO little boys, one of them five and the other six years old. They are standing on the porch. There is a gas lamp burning on the street just in front of the house. It is a dreary winter evening, about five o'clock —time to light up all around. In the dim light there, they are softly conversing.

The First One: I've got six pennies already. By Sunday I'll have eight and by Wednesday sixteen. By Friday I shall have twenty, for my grandma comes on that day always and I am going to buy the aeroplane that you can pull.
The Other One: The one you can pull?

The First : Yes. The one that you push costs forty.
Only girls get that. The boy aeroplane is a puller,
and it has rubber inside and it's only twenty.

The Other: Why don't you ask your father for more money ?

The First : Because he committed suicide.

The Other: What did he commit?

The First : Suicide. Still, he is a lawyer.

The Other: (Looking at him very gravely.) How
did he commit suicide?

The First : Well, he committed, that's all. Can't he
if he likes to?

The Other: But when? At noon I saw him on the
street. The First : Yes, he was taking a walk and then we had
lunch and then he lay down on the sofa and so he committed
suicide. I couldn't ask him for money, but I am
telling you, when my grandma comes on Friday, she al-
ways gives me at least five. With that I shall have the
twenty and I'll buy the aeroplane.

The Other: But your father . . .

The First : What do you want always with my father ?
I told you to leave me alone. The Other: Did he die?

The First: Of course he died: What are you looking
at me like that for ? What are you teasing me for ? Your
father is a janitor and I never teased you for it, altho I
could have done, because my father is a lawyer.

Even if he died, he is a lawyer, attorney-at-law-.

The Other: Why don't you tell me?

*Both are looking intensely at each other. The Other's
eyes are very bright and he is all excitement. He is urging
the First One with his very eyes to tell the story.*

The First: You are looking so funny with your eyes.

The Other: Why don't you tell me?

The First: Should I tell you?

The Other: Yes, go on. The First : I think I can tell it.

The Other: Of course you can. If you want me,
I cross my heart and it will remain a secret forever ;
besides, I am not going to tell anybody.

The First: So you see we had lunch, and a very good
lunch, for we had green peas in the soup and my mother
said : I say, Sigmund, why are you so silent ? The clients
call him Councillor and my mother calls him Sigmund
and your father calls him the Landlord.

The Other: Not always, for sometimes he calls him
just Sir—and you needn't throw it up every time, either.

The First : I am not throwing it up, only you needn't
think, that now that my father is dead, we are as poor
as you are, for we are still the landlords.

The Other: Not true.

The First : Yes it is. The Other: No, it isn't. (*Pause.*)

The Other: And then, how was it?

The First : My mother asked him :

Have you got a headache, Sigmund? And she asked him: What are you looking at the child for constantly? You see, I am the child, for we have only myself. You see, that's why we shall not be poor, for we are rich because we only have one child. If we were poor, we Would have six.

The Other: We only have four.

The First: Well, you are not very poor; just poor.

Your father only gets wages and tips for the garbage, but we get money from the court.

The Other: And how was it?

The First : Because my father was always looking at me.

My father gave her no answer, and my mother asked him again : What's the matter with you ? Have you lost your voice? Sigmund, why dont you answer me ? My father told her : Leave me alone, my dear. He called her my dear, for with gentlemanly people it is a custom to call one another my dear. Your father doesn't call your mother my dear, for you are just common people.

The Other: Why should we be common people?

The First : Because your father is just a working man, a laborer, what they call a laborer.

The Other: We are not laborers, we dont go out to work.

The First: Who cleans the stairs and who sweeps away the snow ? That's laboring, that's laboring.

The Other: No it isn't.

The First: What then is it?

The Other : That's house-superintending.

The First : That's laboring, too, as long as it goes with broom and shovel. So when we finished lunch and I kissed them, my father pressed me to his waistcoat, and kissed me, and pressed me and he wouldn't leave go, so my mother asked him in French so that I shouldn't understand : quelqueshosc, quelqueshose? And my father said : non, non, nori, and that, too, is in French and means no, but I was not supposed to understand, you know.

The Other: And then he committed suicide?

The First: No. He first told my mother that he wants to lie down a bit and sleep, and my mother told the chambermaid to put a pillow on the sofa and the ash-tray on a chair next to the sofa, for he would throw the ashes all on the floor—you burned the carpet last week, my dear, she said.

The Other: Does he smoke cigars?

The First: No, cigarettes.

The Other: Do you ever steal any?

The First : No, I dont. Do you collect tobacco ? Why didn't you tell me before? I could have brought you some. Now it's too late, he is dead.

The Other: How did he die?

The First : He lay down on the sofa and my mother went out of the room to read the newspaper, and then my father called me, and as I went in he was smiling.

The Other: Was he smiling?

The First : Yes, with his mouth and face, but with his eyes he was crying, for the tears were running down his face and he told me I should go right near to him.

The Other: And you went?

The First : Sure. He pressed me again to his waistcoat and it hurt, and I said : papa dont, and then I saw a revolver behind his back on the sofa and I wanted to tell him to let me see it.

The Other: What was it like? Shiny?

Soldiers have shiny ones and policemen black ones.

The First: It was a police one.

The Other: Where is it now?

The First: He is holding it in his hand still, they said you mustn't take it away from him.

The Other: And how did he shoot?

The First: I wanted to tell him to let me see it, but he sent me out of the room and the tears were coming from his eyes and I was just going to tell my mother that he's got a nice revolver, when I heard a boom, like a backfire, so I ran back to the room and saw him, and he shot into his heart, and his mouth was a bit drawn to the side, but he didn't say anything.

The Other: Did he shoot only once?

The First: I thought: he will shoot some more, and waited, but he didn't. Altho there are six bullets in a revolver.

That's why they call it revolver.

The Other: And why didn't he shoot some more?

The First: Because he was dead. He hit the middle of his heart. But it's easy from so near. It is more difficult to hit a target in a shooting range. Did you ever go to a shooting gallery?

The Other: Yes. Three shots for ten. In the City Park it is three for five.

The First : Is there a drummer there, too? If you hit it with the gun, he beats the drum.

The Other : Yes. There is one there. There is even a rabbit, and if you hit the tail, it runs. I saw a soldier, and he was

an artillery soldier, too, and he couldn't hit the tail. All Sunday afternoon he tried. And the other soldiers were laughing, but they were just infantry. Then his money gave out and he went off without scoring a hit. He was an artillery soldier. A long and embarrassed silence. The First: What are you going to be? The Other: Artillery soldier.

Without noticing the First One, the Other One walks slowly off towards the garden and climbs up the dusting-pole. There he is perched and is looking up at the Lawyer's windows on the first floor. He is silent and is biting his nails.

Mrs. Atwood's Outer Raiment

Project Gutenberg's *Little Stories of Married Life*, by Mary Stewart Cutting

“HOW much will a new suit cost, Jo?” Mr. Atwood held his fingers reflectively on the rubber band of his pocketbook as he asked the question, and glanced as he did so at the round brunette face of his wife, which had suddenly become all flush and sparkle.

“Oh, Edward!”

“Well?”

“You oughtn’t to give me the money for it now—you really oughtn’t. There are so many calls on you at this season of the year, I don’t see how we can meet them as it is. The second quarter of Josephine’s music lessons begins next month, and the dancing school bill comes in too—besides the coal. Everything just piles in before Christmas. I meant to have saved the money, for a coat at any rate, this summer out of my allowance, but I was obliged to fit Josephine out from head to foot—she grows so fast, she takes as much for a dress as I do. But it doesn’t make any difference—I can do very well for a while with what I have—really!”

“How about the Washington trip with me next month? I thought you said you couldn’t go anywhere without a new suit?”

“Well, I can’t, but—”

“That settles it.”

Mr. Atwood pulled off the rubber band from the pocketbook and laid it on the table before him, as he extracted a roll of bills and began to count them. It was a shabby article, worn brown at the edges, but it had been

made of handsome leather to begin with, and still held together in spite of many years of service. Mrs. Atwood would hardly have known her husband without that pocketbook. It represented in its way the heart of a kind and generous man, always ready to do his utmost in help of the family needs, without complaint or caviling.

His wife always experienced mingled feelings when that leather receptacle appeared—a quick and blessed relief and a sharp wince, as if it were really his heart's blood that she was taking. Her fervent imagination was perennially ready to picture unknown depths of stress.

He paid no attention now to her inarticulate murmur of protest; but asked, in a business-like way,

“How much will it take?”

“I could get the material for a dollar a yard—” Mrs. Atwood sat with her hands clasped and her eyes looking off into space, feeling the words wrung from her—“I could get it for a dollar a yard, but I suppose it ought to be heavier weight for the winter.”

“Have it warm enough, whatever else you do,” interrupted her husband.

“It would take seven yards, or I might get along with six and a half, it depends on the width. It's the linings that make it mount up to so much, and the making. You can get a suit made for ten dollars; Cynthia Callender did, and hers looks well, but Mrs. Nichols went to the same place, and—”

“Will thirty dollars be enough?” asked Mr. Atwood with masculine directness, seeking for some tangible fact.

“Oh, yes. I'm sure it will be, I—”

“Then here's fifty,” said Mr. Atwood. He counted out five tens and pushed them over to her. “Get a good suit while you're about it, Jo.”

“Oh, Edward. I don't want—”

“Make her take it,” said a girl of sixteen, rising from the corner where she had been sitting with a book in her hand, a very tall and thin and pretty girl, brunette like her mother, with a long black braid that hung down her back. She came forward and threw her arm around her mother's neck, bending protectingly over her. “Make her take it, papa. She buys everything for me and the boys, and goes without herself, so that I'm ashamed to walk out in the street with her; it makes me look so horrid to be all dressed up when she wears that old spring jacket. When it's cold she puts a cape over it. I wish you'd see that cape! She's had it since the year one. She doesn't dare wear it when she goes out with you,

she just shivers."

"Hush, hush, Josephine," said the mother embarrassed, yet laughing, as her husband lifted his shaggy eyebrows at her in mock severity. "You needn't say any more, either of you. I'll take the money." She paused impressively, and then gently pushed the girl aside and went over and kissed her husband.

"If I were only as good a manager as some people! I don't know what's the matter with me. I try, and I try, but—"

"Yes, yes, I know," said the husband. "All I ask now is that you spend this money on yourself; it's not for other needs. Remember! You are to spend it all on yourself."

"Yes, I will," said Mrs. Atwood, with the guilty thrill of the perjured at the very moment of her promise. She knew very well that some of it would have to be spent for other needs. She had but fifty cents left of her allowance to last her until the end of the month, five long days away. No one but the mother of a family of moderate means realizes what the demand for pads, pencils, shoestrings, lunches, postage stamps, hair ribbons, medicines, mended shoes, and such like can amount to in that short time. She had meant to ask Edward to advance her a little more on the next month's allowance—already largely anticipated—but she had not the face to after his generosity to her now. A couple of dollars out of the fifty would make very little difference, and she did not need it all, anyway. She almost wept as she thought of Josephine's championship of her, and her husband's thoughtfulness.

Mrs. Atwood adored her husband and her three children. She firmly believed them to be superior in every way to all other mortals; sacrificing service for them was her joy of joys, her keenest affliction the fear that she did not appreciate them half enough. It is certain that the children, truthful, loving, and obedient as they had been trained to be, would have been spoiled beyond tolerance if it were not that the very strength of her admiration made it innocuous. They were so used to being told that they were the loveliest and dearest things on earth that the words were not even heard. As they grew older the extravagance of her devotion was beginning to rouse the protective element in them, to her wonder and humility.

Mrs. Atwood, at twenty, the time of her marriage, had been a warm-hearted, fervent, loquacious, impulsive child. At thirty-eight she was still in many ways the girl her husband had married; even to her looks, while he appeared much older than his real age, in reality but a couple of years ahead of hers. She was always longing to be a silent, noble, and finely-balanced character, quite oblivious of the fact that she suited him, a humorous but self-contained man, exactly as she was, and that he would have been very lonesome with anything more perfect.

Perhaps, after all, there are few things that are better to bring into a household than an uncalculating and abounding love, even if the manifestations of it are not always of the wisest.

The extra money cast a rich glow over Mrs. Atwood's horizon. In the effulgence of it she received a bill for twelve dollars presented to her just after breakfast the next morning, by the waitress, with the word that the man waiting outside the door had already brought it once before, when they were out of town. Could Mrs. Atwood pay it now? He needed the money.

"Why, certainly," said Mrs. Atwood with affluent promptness. The bill was for work on the lawn during the summer, something her husband always paid for, but it seemed a pity to have the man go away again when the money was there at hand. She would not in the least mind asking Edward to refund it to her. But she felt the well-known drop into her usual condition of calculating economy.

Her husband came home that night with a bad headache, and the night after she had another bill waiting for him for repairs on the furnace. It was unexpectedly and villainously large, and Mrs. Atwood was constitutionally incapable of adding another straw to his burden, while she stood by consenting sympathetically unto his righteous wrath. A day later, when she spoke of going to town to buy the material for her new costume with outward buoyancy, but inward panic at the rapid shrinkage of her funds, Sam, a boy of twelve, announced the fact that he must have a new suit of clothes at once. As it was Saturday, he could accompany her.

"What is the matter with those you have on? They are not in the least worn out," said his mother.

"Mamma, they're so thin that I'm freezing all the time I'm in school. You ought to have heard me coughing yesterday."

"You have the old blue suit; I'm sure that's thick enough."

"The blue suit! Yes, and it hurts me, it's so tight I can hardly walk in it. I can't sit down in it at all. It makes ridges all around my legs."

Mrs. Atwood looked at her son with rare exasperation. It was well known that when Sam took a dislike to his clothes for any reason, they always hurt him. His coats, his trousers, his caps, his shoes, even his neckties developed hitherto unsuspected attributes of torture. And there was always a haunting feeling with the outraged dispenser of these articles that it might be true. A penetrative and scornful remark from the passing Josephine at once emphasized this view of the case to the anxious mother, remorseful already at her own lack of sympathy.

“I’m astonished at you, Josephine. If the clothes hurt him—” but the girl had disappeared beyond hearing. Sam came from town that jubilant evening, in warm and roomy jacket and trousers, and, oh, weakness of woman! with a new football, besides. Mrs. Atwood carried with her a box of lead soldiers for Eddy, and a sweet little fluffy thing in neckwear for Josephine, such as she saw other girls displaying. After all, what was her own dress in comparison with the darling children’s happiness? She would get some cheap stuff and make it up herself. No one would know the difference.

“How about your suit, Jo?” asked her husband one evening as they sat around the fire. “Is it almost finished?”

“Not—exactly,” said Mrs. Atwood.

“The club goes to Washington on the fifteenth of the month, it was decided to-day. Nearly all the men are going to take their wives with them. I’m looking forward to showing off mine.”

“My mamma will look prettier than any of them,” said Eddy belligerently.

“And lots younger,” added Sam.

“Have you ordered the suit yet?” asked the voice of Josephine. Oh, how her mother dreaded it!

“No, I haven’t—yet,” she felt herself forced into saying.

“I don’t believe there is any money left for it,” pursued the pitiless one. “She spends it for other things, papa. She pays bills and doesn’t tell, because she hates to bother you. And she buys things for us. And she paid a subscription to the Orphan’s Home yesterday, and she got a new wash-boiler for Katy. And—”

“Hush, hush, Josephine,” said her father severely. “I found that receipted bill of Patrick’s lying around the other day, Jo. I should have paid you back at once. How much money have you left?”

“Oh, Edward—I’m so foolish. I—”

“Have you thirty dollars?”

“I—I don’t think so.”

“Have you twenty?”

“I haven’t—more than that.” She had, as she well knew, the sum of nine dollars and sixty-seven cents in the purse in her dressing table drawer.

“Will this help you out?” His tone had the business-like quality in it as natural as breathing to a man when he speaks of money matters, and which a woman feels almost as a personal condemnation in its chill removal from sentiment.

“Oh, Edward—please don’t! It makes me feel so—” She tried not to be too abject. “But nearly all of it has gone for necessary things.”

“That’s all right.” He added with a touch of severity. “Don’t let there be any mistake about it this time, Jo,” and she murmured contentedly,

“No. No, indeed.”

With her allowance money, too, how could there be?

Mrs. Atwood now set herself seriously to the work of getting appareled. She read advertisements, and went to town two days in succession, bringing home samples of cloth for family approval; she sought the advice of her young sister-in-law, Mrs. Callender, and of her friend, Mrs. Nichols, with the result that she finally sat down one morning immediately after breakfast, and wrote a letter to a New York firm ordering a jacket and skirt made like one in a catalogue issued by them, and setting down her measurements according to its directions. Just before she finished, a maid brought her up word that Mrs. Martindale was below.

“Mrs. Martindale—at this time in the morning!”

Mrs. Martindale was her cousin, and lived over the other side of the track, some distance away. Mrs. Atwood hurried down with a premonition of evil to find the visitor, a pretty woman, elegantly but hastily gowned, sitting on the edge of a chair, as if ready for instant flight. There was a wild expression in her eye.

She began at once, taking no notice of Mrs. Atwood’s greeting.

“I suppose you think I’m crazy to come here in this way. I didn’t sleep a wink last night. I didn’t know what to do. We’re in such a state!”

“Is it the business?”

“Oh, it’s the estate and the business and everything. Mr. Bellew’s death has just brought the whole thing to a standstill. All the money is tied up in some dreadful way—don’t ask me . Of course it will be all right in three or four weeks, Dick says, and we have credit everywhere. It’s just to tide over this time. But we haven’t a penny of ready money; not a penny . It would be ridiculous if it wasn’t horrible. Dick gave me all he could scrape together last week, and told me to try and make it

last, but it's all gone—I couldn't help it. And the washerwoman comes to-day. If you could let me have ten dollars, Jo; I couldn't bear to let Dick know."

"Why, certainly," said Mrs. Atwood with loving alacrity. "Don't say another word." If she felt a pang, she scorned it.

"You don't know how many calls there are on one," murmured the other, sinking back with relief.

Mrs. Atwood thought she did, but she only said, "You poor thing," and rushed upstairs to get one of her crisp ten-dollar bills; she could not use the house money for this. She passed Josephine in the hall, afterwards, on her way to school, and held the bill behind her, but she felt sure the girl's keen eyes had spied it.

"I'm so glad I had it! Are you sure this will be enough?" she asked as the other kissed her fervently. What were clothes for herself in comparison with poor Bertha's need? She would look over the catalogue again to-morrow, when she had time, and order a cheaper suit, or buy one ready made.

After all, she did neither. Her money—but why chronicle further the diminution of her forces? Delay made it as inevitable as the thaw after snow. Her entire downfall was completed the day she had unexpected and honorable company to dinner, and sent Sam out to the nearest shops instead of those at which she usually dealt, to "break a bill"—heart-rending process—in the purchase of fruits and sweets for their consumption. No one has ever satisfactorily explained why the change from five dollars never amounts to more than two dollars and sixteen cents. Poor Mrs. Atwood could never get quite used to the fact that if she spent money it was gone. She cherished an underlying hope that she could get it back somehow.

As the time approached for the Washington trip she did not dare to meet her Edward's eye, and replied but feebly to his unusually jolly anticipations of "this time next week." She had hoped that she might have some excuse to remain at home, much as she had longed for this jaunt alone with her husband, but there seemed to be no loophole of escape.

She tried to freshen up her heaviest skirt, and took the spring jacket she was wearing and made a thick lining to it, planning to disguise it further with a piece of fur at the neck. She felt horribly guilty when Josephine came in and caught her at it. The tall girl with her red cheeks just out of the wintry air looked at her mother with an inscrutable expression, but she merely said,

"I suppose that's to save your new suit. You'll never be able to get

into it, if you put so much wadding in," and went off again. The mother felt relieved, yet a little hurt, too, in some mysterious way.

Many a time she tried to screw her courage up to confessing that she had no outer raiment; that after all the money and all her promises she had nothing to show in exchange. The fatal moment had to come, but she put it off. She had done it so many times! For herself she did not mind; she could have confessed joyfully to all the crimes in the Decalogue, if it would have benefited her dear ones, but to wound their idea of her, to pain them by showing how unworthy she was, how unfit to be trusted—that came hard. She prayed a great deal about it on her knees by the bed in the dusk of her own room when she came upstairs after dinner, on the pretext of "getting something"; she belonged to the old-fashioned, child-like order of women who do pray about things, not only daily, but hourly, and who, unknown to themselves, exhale the sweetness born of heavenly contact.

She wondered if, perhaps, it might not be better if she were dead, she was such a poor manager, and set such a bad example to the children. Josephine had that clear common sense that she lacked. The girl was getting to be so companionable to her father, too. She had the sacrificial pleasure of the victim when she heard them laughing and talking downstairs together.

"Well, Jo, has your suit come home yet?"

It was three nights before the fateful Thursday, and the family were grouped in the library as was their wont in the evenings immediately after dinner. Eddy was lying on the fur rug playing with the cat in the warmth of the wood fire, and Mr. Atwood, in a big chair with his wife leaning on the arm of it, sat watching the little boy. The two older children were studying by a table in the back of the room in front of a shaded lamp, with a pile of books before them.

Mr. Atwood, although his hair and mustache were grizzled and his face prematurely lined, had a curious faculty of suddenly looking like a boy, under some pleasurable emotion; anticipation of his holiday made him young for the moment. His wife thought him beautiful.

"Did you say it had not come home yet? You must be sure to have it on time. Take all your party clothes along, too."

"Oh, yes, I'm going to," said Mrs. Atwood. She was on sure ground here. The gown she had had made for a wedding in the spring was crying to be worn again.

"What color did you decide on?"

"I—I decided on—brown," said Mrs. Atwood with fixed eyes. Her respite

was gone.

“Brown—yes, I always liked you in brown. Have you heard your mother talk much about her new clothes, Josephine?”

“No,” said Josephine, “I haven’t.”

“Didn’t you wear brown when we went on our wedding trip? It seems to me that I remember that. I know you had red berries in your hat, for I knocked some of them out.”

“Were you married in a brown dress?” called Sam.

“No,” answered the father for her, “your mother was married in white—some kind of white mosquito-netting. What makes you look so unhappy, Jo? Aren’t you glad to go off with me—in a new suit?”

“Edward!” said Mrs. Atwood. She rose and stood in front of him, her dark eyes unnaturally large, the color coming and going in her rounded olive cheek. Her red lips trembled. Here, before the loved and dreaded domestic tribunal she would be shriven at last. Her children should know just what she was like. “Edward! I have something to tell you.”

“There’s the door bell,” said her husband with an arresting hand, as he listened for the outer sounds.

“A package, sir. By the express. Twenty-five cents.”

“Have you the change, Jo? It’s some clothes I ordered myself for the Washington trip; I wanted to do you credit. Oh, don’t go upstairs for it.”

“I don’t mind,” said Mrs. Atwood. Change! She had nothing but change. Clothes! How easy it was for him to get them! Do her credit—in his glossy newness, while she was in that old black skirt, grown skimp and askew with wear, and that tight, impossible jacket! She charged up and down stairs in the vehemence of her emotion, filled with anger at her folly, and paid the man herself before reentering the library.

Her husband was untying the cords of the long pasteboard box with slow and patient fingers. He was a man who had never cut a string in his life. The children were standing by in what seemed unnecessary excitement, their faces all turned to her as she came toward them. Edward had lifted the cover of the box.

“What color are your clothes, Edward?” asked his wife. It was the first time that he had ever bought anything without consulting her.

“What color? Oh—brown,” said Mr. Atwood. He swooped her into a front

place in the circle with his long arm. "Here, look and tell me what you think of this."

"Edward!"

"Lined throughout with taffeta, gores on every frill—why, Jo! Bring your mother a chair, Josephine."

Before the eyes of Mrs. Atwood lay the rich folds of a cloth skirt, surmounted by a jacket trimmed with fur.

She lay back in the armchair with the family clustered around her, their tongues loosened.

"We all knew about it—" "We promised not to tell—" "We wanted to see you get it—" "There won't be anybody as pretty as you, mamma." "You left out that letter of measurements, and papa and I took it to Aunt Cynthia"—this from Josephine—"and she helped us. She says you're disgracefully unselfish." The girl emphasized her remark with a sudden and strangling hug. "There isn't anybody in the world as good as you are. I was watching you all last week; I knew you wouldn't buy a thing. But it was papa who thought of doing it, when I told him. Feel the stuff—isn't it lovely? so thick and soft. He and Aunt Cynthia said you should have the best; she can spend money! And you're to go uptown to-morrow with me to buy a hat with red in it, and if the suit needs altering it can be done then. Don't you like it, mamma?"

"It's perfectly beautiful," said the mother, her hands clasped in those of her three darlings, but her eyes sought her husband's.

He alone said nothing, but stood regarding her with twinkling eyes, through a suspicion of moisture. What did she see in them? The love and kindness that clothed her not only with silk and wool, but with honor; that made of this new raiment a vesture wherein she entered that special and exquisite heaven of the woman whose husband and children arise up and call her blessed.



Lillian Gish, 1925

CHAPTER HEADING

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Three Stories & Ten Poems, by Ernest Hemingway

For we have thought the longer thoughts
And gone the shorter way.
And we have danced to devils' tunes,
Shivering home to pray;
To serve one master in the night,
Another in the day.

THE RAINCOAT KING

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Abe and Mawruss*,
Further Adventures of Potash and Perlmutter, by Montague Glass

"The table is all right, Mawruss," Abe Potash remarked as he consulted the timecard of the Long Island Railroad one hot July afternoon. "The table is all right; I ain't kicking about the table, y'understand, but the class of people which they stay in the house, Mawruss, is pretty *schlecht*. My Rosie couldn't get along with 'em at all."

"You don't tell me!" Morris replied. "Riesenberger's is got a big reputation, Abe, and when me and Minnie stayed there two years ago there was an elegant class of people stopping in the house. Would you believe me, Abe, I tried to get up a game of auction pinocle there and I couldn't do it! Nobody would play less than a dollar a hundred. I'm surprised to hear the place is run down so."

"Oh, if the house's got a big reputation for auction pinocle, Mawruss, then that's something else again! They play just as high as former times. Sidney Koblin lost forty dollars last night. With my own eyes I seen it, Mawruss; and his father looks on and don't say nothing."

"What does Max Koblin care for forty dollars, Abe?" Morris said. "The feller's a millionaire. He's got ten pages of advertising in the *Cloak and Suit Monthly Gazette*. I bet yer he spends more as forty dollars for one page already. Wait; I'll show it to you."

Morris opened the green-covered periodical and displayed a full-page "ad."

*MAX KOBLIN
KING OF RAINCOATS*

"KOBLINETTE," THE RAINSHED FABRIC

*WEST 20TH STREET
NEW YORK*

"Sure, I know, Mawruss," Abe commented. "He was always a big faker, that feller. Twenty years since already I used to eat by Gifkin's on Canal Street, and one day Max Koblin comes in and says to me, 'Abe,' he says, 'I want you should drink a bottle tchampanyer wine on me.' In them days Max works for old man Zudosky selling boys' reefers. Raincoats was like oitermobiles; no one had discovered 'em yet. 'What's the matter, Max?' I says. 'Old man Zudosky given you a raise?' I says. 'Raise nothing,' Max says. 'I got a boy up to my house.' 'So,' I says, 'just because you got a boy, Max, I should got a headache and neglect my business?' I

says. 'An idee!' I says. 'Take the dollar and a quarter, Max,' I says, 'and put it in the savings bank, and every time you give the boy a penny make him put it away with the other money,' I says; 'and the first thing you know, Max,' I says, 'when the boy gets to be twenty years old he's got anyhow a couple hundred dollars in the savings bank.'"

"And what did Max say?" Morris asked.

"He laughs at me, Mawruss," Abe replied. "He says to me, 'when that boy gets to be twenty years old he wouldn't need to got to have a couple hundred dollars in the savings bank. I could give him all the money he wants it.'"

"Well, Max was right, ain't it?" Morris rejoined. "He could give the boy all the money he wants."

"Money ain't everything what that boy wants, Mawruss," Abe said. "A good potch on the side of the head oncen in a while is what that boy wants. So fresh that young feller is, Mawruss, you wouldn't believe it at all. Actually he runs an oitermobile what Max bought it for him for fifteen hundred dollars, a birthday present, besides the other big car which Koblin got it. Max *oser* runs oitermobiles at Sidney's age. Piece goods on a pooshcart from old man Zudosky's to the sponger's was all the oitermobiling Max done it. To-day they are putting on style yet. Suckers!"

"Well, say, Abe," Morris protested, "what is it skin off your nose supposing Max does buy oitermobiles for the boy? This is a free country, Abe."

"Sure, I know, Mawruss," Abe declared, as he revealed the nub of the whole matter; "and supposing my Rosie don't play poker, which, *Gott sei dank*, she couldn't tell a king from an ace, what is that Mrs. Koblin's business? She ain't supposed to know that, Mawruss, and yet she didn't invite my Rosie to her poker party. Rosie wouldn't of gone anyhow, Mawruss; but that ain't the point. Ain't my Rosie just as good as Mrs. Klinger oder Mrs. Elenbogen? Particularly Mrs. Elenbogen, which, three years ago even, Kleiman & Elenbogen was still rated ten to fifteen thousand, third credit. Only in the last two years they are coming up so; and the way that Mrs. Elenbogen acts, you would think her husband got a bank in Frankfort-am-Main when Rothschild was a new beginner yet. Such fakers as them is too good for my Rosie, Mawruss. An idee!"

"What do you worry yourself about women's fighting, Abe?" Morris asked.

"Me worry myself, Mawruss!" Abe cried. "I much care for them people, Mawruss. I am married to my Rosie now going on twenty-six years, will be next May, and if I didn't know that she's got it on every one of them cows in looks, in refinement and in every which way, Mawruss, then I

could worry, Mawruss. As it is, Mawruss, for my part they could play poker till they are black in the face--what is it my business? I got enough to attend to here in the store, Mawruss, without I should bother myself."

"I bet yer!" Morris agreed fervently. "That reminds me, Abe, Shapolnik is leaving us on Saturday."

"Well, Mawruss, I couldn't exactly break my heart about that, y'understand?" Abe replied, "Skirt-cutters you could always get plenty of 'em. What's the matter he ain't satisfied?"

"Nothing's the matter," Morris said. "He is simply going into the pants business. His brother-in-law is got a small place downtown and he is going as partners together with him. They ought to make a success of it too, Abe, if nerve would got anything to do with it. The feller actually wants me I should give him an introduction to Feder of the Kosciusko Bank."

"Sure; why not?" Abe commented.

"Why not?" Morris repeated. "What would Feder think of us if we are bringing a yokel like Shapolnik into his office? The feller ain't been two years in the country yet."

"Don't knock a feller like Shapolnik just because he ain't putting on no front nor throwing no bluffs, Mawruss," Abe retorted. "It's the faker with the four-carat diamond pin which is doing his creditors, Mawruss, but the yokel with the soup on his coat pays a hundred cents on the dollar every time."

Half an hour later Abe conducted his retiring skirt-cutter to the Fifth Avenue branch of the Kosciusko Bank, and as they approached the corner of Nineteenth Street on their return they encountered Max Koblin, the Raincoat King. He was about to enter the tonneau of an automobile, while Sidney Koblin, the Heir Apparent, sat at the tiller arrayed in a silk duster and goggles. Max grinned maliciously as he noted Abe's shabby, bearded companion.

"Always entertaining the out-of-town trade, Abe?" he said.

Abe relaxed his features in what he intended for a smile, but afterward he turned to Shapolnik with a scowl.

"Only one thing I got to tell you, Shapolnik," he declared. "Nowadays, if a feller wants to make a success he must got to wear good clothes and look like a *mensch*, y'understand? It never harms in business, Shapolnik, that a feller should throw sometimes, oncet in a while, a little bluff."

* * * * *

Between the ages of sixteen and twenty Sidney Koblin had so often tested the maxim, "Boys will be boys," that Max Koblin's patience at length became exhausted. "Do you mean to told me you ain't got one cent left from that forty I gave you on Saturday?" Max asked on the Monday morning following Shapolnik's resignation.

"Aw, what's biting you?" Sidney cried. "You sat behind me last night and if it wouldn't been for you I wouldn't of played that last four-hundred hand at all. Cost forty-eight dollars, that advice of yours."

This was a facer, to be sure, and Max paused before formulating a rejoinder.

"In the first place, Sidney," he began, "you didn't got no right to lead no trump. I told you before lots of times, if you got the extra ten, get rid of your meld first. And in the second place, Sidney, I wouldn't stand for your extravagance no longer. It's time you turned around and attended to business."

"Aw, you never give me no show!" Sidney protested. "You keep me monkeying around while other young fellers is out on the road. Look at Mortie Savin and all them boys."

"Sure, I know," Max rejoined. "They got heads on 'em. You couldn't add up eight figures together, and at your age for a feller to write a hand like that, Sidney---"

"What are you kicking about?" Sidney exclaimed. "When you was my age you couldn't sign your name even."

"Well, that ain't here nor there, Sidney," Max replied as he pulled a bill from the roll which he produced from his trousers pocket. "Here is ten dollars and that's got to last you till Saturday night. D'ye understand?"

Sidney grunted as he tucked the bill into his waistcoat. He had heard the same ultimatum once a week for the past two years, and he whistled cheerfully as he despatched one of the stock boys for a package of cigarettes. An hour later he lunched at Hammersmith's, while Abe Potash sat at an adjacent table. As he consumed a modest portion of *rostbraten*, Abe noted with a disapproving eye the cherry-stone clams, green-turtle soup and *filet Chateaubriand* which formed the menu of the Heir Apparent; and when the latter topped off his meal with half a pint of dry champagne and a *café parfait*, Abe seized his hat and fairly ran from the restaurant.

"If nobody would tell that feller Koblin what a lowlife bum he got it for a son, Mawruss," he said as he entered the firm's private office ten minutes later, "I will. Actually with my own eyes I seen it--the feller eats for five dollars a lunch, and he ain't with a customer nor nothing."

"What is it your business what Sidney Koblin is eating, Abe?" Morris rejoined. "If you wouldn't notice every mouthful the feller puts in his face at all you would be back here a whole lot sooner. There's a feller waiting for you in the showroom over half an hour since."

"Who is he?" Abe asked.

"I think it's that Mr.--Who's this, from Seattle, which he was in here last fall and nearly bought from us them polo coats? I couldn't tell his face exactly, but you remember what a swell dresser that feller was."

Abe peered through the screen that divided the rooms.

"I think you're right, Mawruss," he said.

"I couldn't remember his name," Morris added, "and that's why I didn't talk much to him. All I says was you would be in soon; and I give him a cigar from the safe."

Abe nodded and walked hurriedly out of the office. As he approached his caller he extended his right hand.

"How do you do?" he exclaimed, as he shook his visitor warmly by the hand. "You're looking fine."

The visitor smiled in return.

"I thought you were going to tell me that," he replied.

"Yes, indeed! You're looking a whole lot better than the last time I seen you," Abe said. "When did you get in?"

"I am here now going on half an hour already."

"Well, why didn't you talk to my partner?" Abe asked. "He could fix you up just as well as me."

"I did talk to him," the newcomer replied, "but he is too stuck up to talk to me at all."

"Stuck up!" Abe exclaimed, with a note of real anguish in his tones. "Stuck up! Why, you don't know my partner at all, Mister--er--excuse me, do you got a card?"

The stranger drew a card from his waistcoat pocket and with a proud gesture handed it to Abe. It read as follows:

Z. KATZBERG I. SCHAPP
KATZBERG & SCHAPP
FINE PANTS
530 WEST WASHINGTON PLACE NEW YORK

"I am taking your advice, Mr. Potash," he said. "I am taking your advice all round. I cut 'em off."

"You cut what off?" Abe asked.

"The whiskers, Mr. Potash. Also I am making short the name. In Russland Shapolnik is all right, Mr. Potash; but if a feller wants to make a success in business he should be a little up to date, ain't it?"

The cordial smile faded from Abe's face as he recognized his visitor.

"There's such a thing as being too much up to date, Shapolnik," he said. "You ain't got no right to fool my partner like that. Me, you couldn't fool for a minute. Right away I says to myself, 'Here is a feller which he wants to ask us something we should do him for a favour.' So, spit it out, Shapolnik. What is it you want from us?"

"Well, it's like this, Mr. Potash," Shapolnik began. "Me and my partner we are wanting to take on somebody for a drummer, y'understand. We must got it some one which he is already got a trade. Aber he couldn't ask for too much money at the start on account we are going slow. If you know some young feller which he wants the job me and my partner would be much obliged, Mr. Potash."

"What d'ye think we are running here anyway, Shapolnik," Abe retorted--"an employment agency?"

"I am just taking chances might you would know somebody, maybe," Shapolnik murmured as he rose to his feet. He seemed much relieved at Abe's refusal. "And I hope you don't think I am doing something out of the way. You know, Mr. Potash, me and my partner we think a whole lot of your judgment, and if you would give us an advice we are willing we should follow it."

"Well, I ain't mad at you, Shapolnik," Abe said more mildly; "but all the same, if you want to get a drummer you got a right to advertise for one."

"We would do so," Shapolnik replied, "and if you would be in our Nachbarschaft oncet in a while, Mr. Potash, me and my partner would

consider it an honour if you are dropping in to see us. We only got a small place, Mr. Potash." He paused and fingered the texture of his waistcoat. "But everything will be up to date, Mr. Potash," he concluded, "just like you advised us to."

Abe watched his late skirt-cutter disappear into the elevator, and then he returned to the office where Morris impatiently awaited him.

"*Nu, Abe,*" Morris cried as he entered.

"Yes, Mawruss," Abe said with cutting emphasis: "good cigars don't care who smokes 'em. I suppose if Nathan, the shipping clerk, would come in here with a collar and tie on and a clean shave, you would want to blow him to a bottle of tchampanyer wine yet. Just because a feller shaves off his beard and buys himself a new suit of clothes you couldn't recognize him at all. That was Shapolnik which just went out of here."

"Shapolnik!" Morris exclaimed. "That dude was Shapolnik? Well, what d'ye think for a crook like that!"

"Crooked Shapolnik ain't exactly," Abe interrupted; "but it should be a lesson to you, Mawruss, that you wouldn't be so free with our cigars. All the feller wants from us is we should recommend him a drummer."

"The nerve the feller got it!" Morris cried. "He comes around here throwing bluffs he needs a drummer yet. A new beginner like him ain't going to hire no drummer, Abe. I bet yer he takes his pants under his arms and sees them Fourteenth Street buyers on his way downtown in the morning. He ain't got no more use for a drummer than I got it for an airship."

"My tzuris if he has or he hasn't!" Abe exclaimed. "I anyhow told him he should advertise for one, as we are not running an employment agency here, Mawruss; and so, Mawruss, let's get busy on that order for Griesman. I want to get away from here sure at five o'clock to-day. What is the good I am staying down at Riesenberger's if I never get a show to take oncet in a while a sea bath, maybe?"

Nevertheless it was ten minutes past five before Abe boarded a crosstown car; and, although he made a wild sprint from the ferry landing on the Long Island side, he arrived at the trainshed just in time to see the rear platform of the five-forty-five for Arverne disappearing in a cloud of black smoke.

He returned to the waiting room, and as he was sadly inspecting the outer pages of the comic periodicals displayed in the news-stand a heavy hand clapped him on the shoulder.

"Hello, Abe!" cried a hearty voice, and Abe turned to view the

perspiring features of Max Koblin, the Raincoat King. Abe returned the salutation without much enthusiasm.

"Why ain't you going down in the oitermobile, Max?" he asked.
"Millionaires ain't got no excuse for missing trains like ordinary people."

Max laughed in an embarrassed fashion.

"Millionaires is got their troubles too, Abe," he said. "Even when they ain't millionaires."

"I should have your trouble!" Abe commented.

"I got enough, Abe, believe me," Max rejoined. "Everything I got to look after myself. My credit man leaves me next week; and I got other worries besides that one, too."

"Sure, I know," Abe said as they started for the smoker of the six-ten; "and the biggest one you got only yourself to blame for it."

"What d'ye mean, Abe?" Max asked.

"I mean this, Max," Abe declared. "I am knowing you now since twenty years already, and if I am butting in you could know it ain't because I am fresh, y'understand, but because I got your interests at heart. That boy of yours goes too far, Max."

Max drew a cigar from his waistcoat pocket and carefully bit off the end. "How so?" he inquired.

"Well, in a whole lot of ways, Max," Abe continued, after they were seated; "and mind you, I know it ain't none of my business, Max, but when I see that boy come into Hammersmith's to-day and eat for five dollars a lunch, with a bottle of tchampanyer wine yet, Max, I couldn't help myself. I got to say something."

Max scowled and spat out the end of his cigar.

"Of course, Max," Abe added, using his partner's metaphor, "it ain't no skin off my nose, y'understand."

"Ain't it?" Max growled as he turned on Abe with a menacing glare.
"Well, it's a wonder it ain't, the way you are sticking it into other people's business. If you think I care what you think about what my boy eats for his lunch you are making a big mistake. I could take care of my own boy, Potash, and I am just as much obliged if you would do the same."

Abe flushed a fiery red and rose to his feet.

"I guess I would go into the next car," he said.

"You could go a whole lot farther for all I care!" Max retorted, and immediately buried his head between the open pages of a conservative evening paper.

Abe had not offended in vain, however, for after dinner that night, when Sidney sought his father in the Koblins' suite at Riesenberger's cottage, the King was in an ugly mood.

"Say, Pop," Sidney began, "how about you for twenty till Saturday night?"

"What d'ye mean?" Max bellowed. "Ain't I given you ten dollars only this morning?"

Sidney laughed uncomfortably. "Ain't you the old tightwad!" he said.

Max's reply to this observation was quite unprecedented in all Sidney's experience. It took the form of an open-handed blow on the cheek, the first ever administered by his indulgent parent since Sidney's infancy. Forthwith began a family row that brought the entire household--guests, servants and proprietress--on the run to the Koblin apartments. When Mrs. Koblin's frightened screams had ceased, and Max Koblin had calmed down sufficiently to offer an evasive explanation, the guests trooped back to the piazza, and three games of auction pinocle, which had started in the dining-room after the tables had been cleared, came to an abrupt close. Instead, the players foregathered with the other guests in the porch rockers.

There they discussed the incident until nearly midnight; and, as no one had been an eyewitness of the affray, there were as many versions of it as may be mathematically demonstrated where one blow is struck among three persons. Some had it that Sidney had attacked his father and others that Mrs. Koblin had assaulted Sidney, but a large feminine majority favoured a construction of the matter as one of wife-beating. Abe alone correctly surmised the turn that Sidney's affairs had taken and he sat on the piazza in conscience-stricken solitude long after all the other guests had retired.

He blamed himself for the entire affair and he smoked cigar after cigar before he sought his bed. As he walked up the broad staircase he met Max Koblin at the first landing.

"Max," he said, "where are you going this time of night?"

Max stopped short. His eyes blazed in a face so careworn and haggard

that, to Abe, he seemed to have aged ten years since their meeting that afternoon.

"This is what comes of your butting in!" Max cried bitterly. "The boy went out right after we had the fuss and he ain't come back."

He paused to choke down a hysterical lump in his throat.

"And God knows what's become of him!" he sobbed as he continued down the stairs.

* * * *

Abe tossed on his pillow all night; and when at breakfast he learned that Sidney Koblin had not returned, he swallowed with difficulty a cup of coffee and left a steak, two eggs and a plate of French-fried potatoes entirely untasted. Thus he was enabled to catch the seven-five instead of the seven-thirty train. When he found himself at the Thirty-fourth Street Ferry with almost half an hour to spare he determined to walk to the store.

He trudged across Thirty-fourth Street with his hands in his pockets and his head bent toward the pavement, a prey to the most bitter reflections; and as he turned the corner of Fifth Avenue he failed to notice, walking in the opposite direction, a tall youth, well dressed save for soiled linen. The latter's eyes showed traces of unmistakable tears; and as they, too, were bent upon the pavement there ensued a violent collision, which almost threw Abe off his feet.

"Why don't you look where you're going?" he began, and then he recognized the object of his wrath. "Sidney!" he yelled, clutching young Koblin's shoulder. "Where are you going?"

"Let me alone," Sidney cried as he sought to free himself.

"*Aber, Sidney,*" Abe pleaded, "you mustn't act so strange with me. Did you got any breakfast yet?"

Sidney shook his head sullenly.

"Me neither," Abe cried. "Come on over to the Waldorf."

Five minutes later they sat at a table in the palm room, while Abe ordered two whole portions of grapefruit, a double portion of tenderloin steak, soufflé potatoes, coffee, waffles and honey.

"Now, listen to me, Sidney," he began. "You shouldn't got mad at your father just because he licks you oncet, y'understand. My poor father, *selig*, he knocks the face off of me regular twicet a week, and I ain't

none the worser for it."

Sidney hung his head and made no reply.

"Furthermore, Sidney," Abe went on, "if you are broke why don't you say so?"

He pulled a roll of bills out of his pocket and handed Sidney twenty dollars.

"Just a loan for a few days, y'understand," he said as the waiter brought in a loaded tray, "or a year--what's the difference--ain't it? Now, let's get busy."

Together they polished off the entire trayful of food, and when Abe leaned back the waiter presented a check for ten dollars and eighty cents.

"Cheap at the price," Abe remarked as he added a generous tip to the amount of the bill. "And now, Sidney, I suppose you're going back to the store?"

"No, I ain't," Sidney said. "I ain't doing no good down there; so what's the use? The old man won't let me do nothing down there and they all think I'm a joke."

"Well, you see, Sidney," Abe commented, "that's the way it goes. It's an old saying, but a true one: 'There's no profit for a feller in his own country.'"

"And what's more," Sidney continued, "they ain't given me a chance neither. What I want to do is to sell goods on the road."

"Sure, I know," Abe interrupted. "Every young feller wants to go on the road. All they can see in it is riding in parlour cars and playing auction pinocle in four-dollar-a-day hotels. Believe me, Sidney, selling goods on the road, when you been at it so long as I am, is a dawg's life; and as for auction pinocle that's poison for a salesman."

"Auction pinocle is nothing to me," Sidney declared. "I swore off."

"Another thing is lunches, Sidney," Abe went on. "Ain't it a funny thing what a lot of satisfaction it is when you are eating zwieback and a cup of coffee for lunch? In the first place, all it is costing you is ten cents and you feel like a prince. Many a big bill of goods I sold on zwieback and coffee, Sidney--crackers and milk, too. And now, Sidney, the best thing you could do is to go back and tell the old man you are through with auction pinocle and high-price lunches, and you want him he should give you a show you should sell goods."

Again Sidney shook his head.

"It ain't no use, Mr. Potash," Sidney declared. "Pop ain't got no confidence in me. If I was a greenhorn fresh from the old country he might let me start in and do something, but----"

At the word greenhorn Abe Potash leaned forward and struck the table with his open hand.

"By jiminy, Sidney!" he cried, "I know the very job for you. Only one thing I must got to say to you, Sidney: you would got to commence small; so if what you are saying about auction pinocle and other monkey business goes, Sidney, all right. Otherwise the thing is off."

"Sure, it goes, Mr. Potash," Sidney cried.

Abe looked the Heir Apparent squarely in the eye for two minutes and then he struck the table again.

"I believe you, Sidney," he said, "and we will right away take the car down to West Washington Place."

Katzberg & Schapp occupied the top floor of an old private house; but what their place of business lacked in size it made up in activity. Pressing irons were sizzling and banging and sewing machines were burring loudly as Abe and Sidney climbed the stairs. When they entered, Shapolnik, the butterfly of fashion, had once more assumed the chrysalis of his working clothes.

"How do you do, Mister Potash?" he cried, all in one breath. "Excuse me; I am looking like a slob. We are busy like dawgs here. Katzberg!" he yelled; "*Kimmen Sie hieran.*"

In response, a stout figure, clad only in an undershirt, trousers and a pair of carpet slippers, laid down a pressing iron and shuffled toward the visitors.

"My partner, Mister Katzberg," Shapolnik announced. "He also looks a slob, Mr. Potash; but when we are getting partitions in, and our office fixed up, no one would see him at all. He is the inside man; and me, I am in the office and showroom. We're going to have a showroom so soon as we are settled--a safe too. A telephone we already got it. This is Mr. Potash, Katzberg, and the other gentleman I don't know at all."

"Mr. Koblin," Abe explained; "he is coming to work by you as a salesman."

"A salesman!" Katzberg exclaimed. "Why, we don't want no----"

Shapolnik turned on him with a glare.

"Katzberg," he said, "them samples you are working on we got to show the Magnet Store this afternoon yet."

Katzberg shrugged his shoulders and returned to his pressing, while Shapolnik drew forward two rickety chairs and a packing-box.

"Have a seat, Mr. Potash; and Mr. Cohen, too," he said.

"Koblin," Abe corrected.

"Koblin," Shapolnik repeated. "Excuse me."

He went to a closet in the corner, and unlocking it he exposed the fashionable suit that he had worn at Potash & Perlmutter's the previous afternoon. From the right-hand waistcoat pocket he took a red-banded invincible and handed it to Abe.

"Have a smoke, Mr. Potash?" he said. Abe examined the cigar closely and tucked it carefully away. Then he produced three panatelas, handed one each to Sidney and Shapolnik and lit the other himself.

"About this here salesman, Mr. Potash," Shapolnik commented. "I think I changed my mind."

Abe blew a great cloud of smoke before replying and then he placed an emphatic forefinger upon Shapolnik's knee.

"A new beginner when he throws bluffs, Shapolnik," he said, "must got to make good. You told me yesterday you wanted a salesman and I am bringing him to you."

Shapolnik blushed.

"Sure, I know I told it you, Mr. Potash," he said, "but my partner thinks otherwise."

Abe nodded.

"The only use some people got for a partner, Shapolnik," he commented, "is they could always blame him for everything they do; but even if you did come in my place just to show me what an elegant suit of clothes and a fine clean shave you got it, Shapolnik, I am bringing you a salesman anyhow."

Katzberg at this juncture again laid down his pressing iron and came forward.

"Say, lookyhere, what is the use talking?" he cried. "We don't need a salesman; and that's all there is to it."

"S enough, Katzberg," Abe shouted. "You got a whole lot too much to say for yourself for a new beginner. I ain't saying you need a salesman, Katzberg; I am only saying that you are going to hire one, Katzberg. And after you hire one you will quick need him."

Abe placed his hand on Sidney's shoulder.

"Here is a young feller which he ain't going to gamble oder fool away his time. He is going to sell goods," he declared. "He works for years by the biggest raincoat house in the country, and he's got an acquaintance among the retail clothing trade which it is easy worth to you twenty-five dollars a week and the regular commissions."

"But we couldn't afford to pay no salesman twenty-five dollars a week," Shapolnik exclaimed.

"Try me just one week," Sidney said, "and I'll bring in enough cash to pay my salary."

"I forgot to say," Abe interrupted, "that he's also got a lot of confidence in himself."

"Maybe I have," Sidney retorted: "but I'm going to make good."

"Certainly you are," Abe added, rising from his chair; "and now, Katzberg, the whole thing is settled."

Katzberg shrugged and extended one palm outward in a gesture of despair.

"Seemingly we are not our own bosses here," he said.

"Seemingly not," Abe rejoined; "but, just the same, if you will take on this young feller for a salesman I would give you a guaran_tirt_ that I will make good all you would lose on him for the first three months. Is my word good enough?"

"Sure, it is!" Shapolnik cried. "When would you come to work by us, Mr. Koblin?"

"This morning," Abe answered for Sidney--"right now; and one thing I must got to say to you, Sidney, before I go: stand in your own shoes and don't try to excuse yourself, on account you got a rich father. Also, if the old man makes you an offer you should come back to him, turn it down. Take it from me, Sidney, you got a big future here."

With a parting handshake all around Abe started back to his place of business. Five minutes later he boarded a Broadway car, and when he alighted at Nineteenth Street he picked his way through a jam of vehicles, which completely blocked that narrow thoroughfare. As he was about to set foot on the sidewalk he caught sight of the gray, drawn countenance of the Raincoat King, who sat beside his chauffeur on the front seat of a touring car.

"Say, Max," Abe cried, "I want to speak to you a few words something."

Max Koblin turned his head and recognized Abe with a start.

"What d'ye want from me?" he said huskily.

"I want to tell you the boy is all right," Abe replied.

The colour surged to Max's face and he leaped wildly from the automobile.

"What d'ye mean, all right?" he gasped.

"I mean all right in every way, Max," Abe answered; "and if you would step into Hammersmith's for a minute I'll tell you all about it."

"Where is he?" Max cried.

Abe led the way to a table.

"He's where he should have been schon long since already," he said as they sat down. "He's got a job and he's going to make good on it."

"What are you talking nonsense?" Max exploded. "Where is my Sidney? His mother is pretty near crazy."

"She shouldn't worry," Abe replied calmly. "The boy is coming home to-night; and if I would be you, Max, I would see to it he pays anyhow eight dollars a week board."

Once more Max grew white--with anger this time.

"Jokes you are making with me!" he bellowed. "Tell me where my boy is quick or I'll---"

"Koosh, Max!" Abe interrupted. "You are making a fool of yourself. I ain't hiding your boy. Just listen a few minutes and I'll tell you all about it."

Forthwith he unfolded to Max a vivid narrative of that morning's adventures; when he concluded Max had grown somewhat calmer.

"But, Potash," he protested, "I don't want the boy he should work by somebody else. Let him come and sell goods by me."

"He couldn't do it and you couldn't either, Max," Abe said. "If he goes back to you, Max, you couldn't change over the way you've been treating that boy ever since he was born, and he sure would go back to the way he has been acting. Let the boy stay where he is, Max."

"Say, lookyhere, Potash," Max burst out, "what are you butting into my affairs for? Ain't I competent to manage my own son?"

Abe deemed it the part of friendship to remain silent, but Max misconstrued his reticence.

"O-o-h!" he exclaimed. "I see the whole business now. You got an interest in this here pants factory and so you practically kidnap my son. Do you know what I think? I think you are trying to jolly me into letting him stay there because you expect maybe I would invest some money in the business."

For two minutes Abe gulped convulsively and blinked at the Raincoat King in stunned amazement. Then he rose slowly to his feet.

"All right, Koblin," he said. "I heard enough from you. I wash myself of the entire matter. For my part you and your son could go to the devil; and take it from me, it won't be your fault if he don't."

When Abe entered the firm's showroom that morning it was nearly half-past eleven and Morris Perlmutter sat behind the pages of the *Daily Cloak and Suit Record* in a sulky perusal of the *Arrival of Buyers* column. Before he looked up he permitted Abe to discard his coat for an office jacket.

"You was taking a sea bath, Abe?" he said at length. "Ain't it? I suppose we would pretty soon got to close up the store so's you could take all the sea baths you want. What?"

Abe refrained from uttering a suitable rejoinder and made straight for the office.

"Mawruss!" he yelled; "ain't the safe open yet?"

"Never mind is the safe open *oder* not, Abe," Morris replied. "So long as you are attending to business the way you are, Abe, it ain't necessary the safe should be opened."

Abe grunted and squatted down in front of the combination. At length the big doors swung open and he drew the box of cigars out of the middle

compartment.

Morris looked on with ill-concealed curiosity while Abe took a banded Invincible from his waistcoat pocket and restored it to the box whence it originally came.

"What's all that for?" Morris asked.

"That's a souvenir from a pleasant morning," Abe replied as he thrust the box of cigars back into the safe and slammed the doors. He was about to return to the showroom, when the telephone bell rang and Morris took the receiver from the hook.

"Hello!" he said. "Yes, this is Potash & Perlmutter. He's right here. Abe, Max Koblin wants to talk to you."

"He does, hey?" Abe replied. "Well, I don't want to talk to him."

"You should tell him that yourself," Morris said as he walked away from the telephone. "I ain't got nothing to do with your quarrels."

Abe watched Morris disappear into the showroom and then he ran to the telephone and slammed the receiver on to the hook with force sufficient almost to wreck the instrument. At intervals of a few seconds the telephone rang for more than half an hour. Fifteen minutes after it had ceased the elevator door opened and Max Koblin entered.

"Cut-throat!" Koblin exclaimed. "I rung up my son and he wouldn't come back. You are turning him against me--you and them two other crooks. You think you would get my money out of me. Very well. I'll show you. I ain't through with you yet. I'll put you fellers where you belong."

"Don't make me no threats, Koblin," Abe said calmly, "because, in the first place, you couldn't scare me any, and, in the second place, if you think I am trying to keep your boy away from you, you are mistaken--that's all. I already wasted a whole morning on him and, just to show you I ain't such a crook as you think I am, I would go right down there now; and if I got to do it I would drag that young loafer out of there by the hair of his head."

Twenty minutes later Abe burst into Katzberg & Schapp's business premises and asked in loud tones for Sidney Koblin. Before the astonished Shapolnik could reply, Max Koblin, who had followed Abe on the next car, arrived all breathless and panted a similar demand.

"He ain't in now," Shapolnik replied; "he is just going to his lunch."

"What d'ye mean by talking to me on the 'phone the way you did this morning?" Max shouted. "You ain't got no business to keep my boy from

me."

"I ain't keeping your boy from you," Shapolnik answered; "and I would speak to you whichever way I would want to. Who are you anyway?"

"*Koosh!* Shapolnik," Abe interrupted. "You are talking too fresh. Mr. Koblin is right. You should fire that young feller right away, because I am telling you right here and now I wouldn't guarantee nothing for him after this."

"What do I care what you would guarantee or what you wouldn't guarantee?" Shapolnik replied. "The young feller already sold for us this morning for five hundred dollars a bill of goods, and he could stay with us *oder* not, just as he wants. Furthermore, Mr. Potash, I don't give a snap of my fingers for your *guarantirt*; this is my shop and if you don't want to stay here you don't got to."

He seized a pressing-iron in token that the interview was ended and Abe and Max started for the stairs without another word. As they reached the sidewalk Abe paused. Across the street a dairy lunchroom displayed its white-enamel sign and through the plate-glass window he thought he discerned a familiar figure. He ran to the opposite sidewalk and entered the restaurant, closely followed by Max, just as Sidney Koblin was eating the last crumbs of a portion of zwieback and coffee.

"Hello, Sidney!" Abe said. "What's the matter with you? Why don't you go back to your father?"

Sidney rose to his feet and looked first at Abe and then at the Raincoat King.

"What for?" he asked nonchalantly.

"Because he asks you to," Abe replied, "and because I didn't got no right to butt in the way I did, Sidney. After all, your father is your father."

"What's biting you now?" Sidney exclaimed. "Ain't you told me this morning I should do what I did?"

Abe nodded sadly.

"And didn't you say me and the old man couldn't give each other a square deal even if we wanted to?"

Abe nodded again.

"Then I'm going to stick to my job," Sidney declared as he walked toward the cashier's desk.

Abe and Max trailed after him and when they reached the sidewalk Max seized his son by the arm.

"Sidney, *leben*," he said; "listen to me. Come and eat anyhow a decent lunch and we'll talk this thing over."

"What for?" Sidney said. "I've had as much as I want to eat, and besides I've got to see a fellow up at the Prince Clarence Hotel. I'll be at Riesenberger's to dinner to-night about the usual time."

"Oh, you will, will you?" Max cried. "Well, all I got to say is you've got to pay for it yourself."

Sidney broke into a laugh.

"That worries me a whole lot!" he said. "I've made enough out of my commissions to-day already to pay a whole week's board down there."

He turned and started across the street, but as he reached the curb he paused.

"Tell mommer she shouldn't worry herself," he said. "I'm all right."

Max looked at Abe with a sickly grin.

"I think he is too, Abe," he murmured. "Would you come over to Broadway and take maybe a little lunch with me?"

"Zwieback and coffee is good enough for me," Abe replied.

Max linked his arm in Abe's.

"You shouldn't be mad at me, Abe," he said sadly. "I am all turned upside down about that boy; and if zwieback and coffee is good enough for you and him, Abe, I guess it must be too good for me. But, just the same, I am going to eat with you, Abe, and we'll let bygones be bygones."

* * * * *

It was some weeks before Abe could bring himself to recount to Morris the full details of Sidney Koblin's regeneration, but Morris had learned the facts long before there appeared in the advertising section of the *Clothing and Haberdashery Magazine* the following full-page advertisement:

KATZBERG, SCHAPP & KOBLIN
Announce the

*OPENING OF THEIR NEW OFFICE AND SHOWROOM
In the Chicksaw Building,
West 4th Street, New York
MAKERS OF TROUSERS FOR FINICKY FOLKS*

*A HEADLINER
THE RAINSHED PANTS
Manufactured from the Famous Rainproof Fabric
"KOBLINETTE"
KEEPS THE LEGS WARM AND DRY
Spring Line Now Ready*

It caught Morris's eye one morning in January and he read it over--not without envy.

"Some people's got all the luck, Abe," he said bitterly.

"I bet yer!" Abe replied, without looking up from his order book, which was overflowing with requisitions for spring garments. "I bet yer, Mawruss! You take my Rosie for instance: at her age you got no idee what a sport she is. Yesterday afternoon she went to a bridge-whist party by Mrs. Koblin's and she won a sterling solid-silver fern dish. And mind you, Mawruss, she only just found out how to play the game."

"Who learned her?" Morris asked.

"Mrs. Klinger and Mrs. Elenbogen," Abe replied. "That's two fine women, Mawruss--particularly Mrs. Elenbogen."

TWO LADIES TAKE TEA

By Djuna Barnes
from the Internet Archive etext of *Shadowland*, April 1923

THE drawing-room of Countess Nicoletti Lupa's little villa overlooking one of the bluest of Italian lakes. The walls are sweetly melancholy with prints of a past voluptuousness. A myriad of tiny glass pendants impale the atmosphere on their darting points. Venetian mirrors, that lied with brittle persistoicc in an age long past, still lie. but the task is not an ungracious one, for the face that pauses before them occasionally, is at once enigmatische, handsome and daring.

The Countess is seated at a desk, resting the hilt of a

pearl-handled pen lightly against her cheek. Tho seated, it is evident that she is tall and stately. She is miraculous with black lace, and pernicious with unpurchasable perfume. The motif of her blue and red ear-rings is carried out by the tall windows directly behind her, representing the Nativity at that moment when the Mother is most poignantly convalescent.

The Countess is of uncertain years. When she moves it is with a dangerous smallness of gesture, the movement of a sword in a scabbard, accompanied by just the right murmur of rebellious ribbons and desperate taffeta. She is so fearfully blase that she does not care where her next shudder is coming from.

She is alone, tho she is evidently expecting a single person to tea. Two delicate cups stand upon a tray near at hand.

The sound of a distant bell is heard, and somewhere from the lake the cry of a grieving bird, just deciding to stand on both feet. There then descends silence.

Presently, however, the countess is aware of the presence of Fanny Blaze, a young American. She has come along the garden path, and now stands leaning against the casement. Slowly she comes in. She is blonde, dressed in hyacinth, and is without ornament save for a single red rose, which she has placed behind her ear. When in Italy do as the Italians, etc. She is below medium in height, but as one might say, exquisitely lacking in inches. It is evident that the two have met both for tea and for no good.

Fanny (coming forward, directly, warmly) : May I?

Lupa (rising, gracious, both hands extended) : Oh, my dear!

Fanny: It is very warm, isn't it?

Lupa : Detestable ! But here, in the shade

Fanny : Perfect.

Lupa (pouring tea) something with ice in it?

Fanny: Oh I thank you, no. Just a little lemon. It's always so touching to be Russian in Italy.

Lupa (the shade of a smile hovering over her lips) : Or at home abroad—or calm during a storm

Fanny (moving her spoon in a perfect circle) : Quite.

Perhaps you would rather have--

Lupa (softly, in a voice pitched to hospitality) : You are in love with my husband, the count?

Fanny (turning her head a little to one side arranging the rose) : Ravished.

Lupa : Is it possible that you are naive ?

Fanny : No, brilliant.

Lupa: I see. Well, as my husband's wife, what have you to offer?

Fanny: Nothing. He is bound to accept.

Lupa : You are—rich ?

Fanny : But not quite American.

Lupa : I love little, blonde, frank women.

Fanny: And I, I am fascinated by your tall brutality.

Lupa : Of course, you know that I ride better than you?

Fanny : Undoubtedly.

Lupa : I have my own way with animals.

Fanny (*enthusiastically*) : Don't I know it.

Lupa (*drawling slightly*) : I have a beautiful foot. It looks well in a stirrup, descending a staircase, on a neck

Fanny (*nodding*) : While mine are deformed with pinching. But they are piquant

Lupa : And I have a sharp tongue

Fanny: My dear countess, you are brilliant, adorable, fascinating ! Were I a man I would choose you, of course. But men are fools, they adore safety ; therefore your husband will follow me home like a chick.

Lupa (*leaning forward on one ringed hand*): Just what does he see in you?

Fanny : Well, to put it in the Scott Fitzgerald way : the speechless and dumfounded.

Lupa : Let us put it still another way : What is wrong with me?

Fanny (*impatiently*) : You are superb. That is enough.

If we were liqueur I could explain it even

better, by saying that I am moonshine and you are aged in the wood. You are too perfect. You need no pruning.

What possible use have you for a lifelong devotion?

You will continue, like the sea, no matter what little sloops are set upon you.

Lupa (*smiling*) : What will you do with Nicoletti when you get him?

Fanny: Heavens! I hadn't thought of that. (*She begins counting off on her fingers.*) I promise to muffle him against the cold, to introduce him to at least one new dish a season, and once in a long while I shall make him a trifle jealous, as we sit in the first-class carriage of some train, leaving one place for another.

Lupa: You almost convince me

Fanny (*with a sigh of ecstasy*) : Darling!

Lupa : That you wont do at all.

Fanny (*coming out of her ecstasy abruptly*) : Won't do?

Lupa (*rising to her full height, lighting a cigarette with fearful poise*) : You see, to begin with, the count has one of those debauched skulls that come to a family

only when the blood can feel no more terror, the heart no more anguish and the mind no further philosophy. The count

is built in every line for a magnificent
funeral—neither more nor less. It will be his last gesture.
(*Raising her hand*) : Wait, I'm not proposing to kill him.
He'll do it all in good time, at just the right
moment, perfectly, leisurely. It will, I promise you, be
superb, irrevocably complete. It will however, as I said, be his
last, his very last gesture, my dear Fanny Blaze.

Fanny (*rising nervously*) : I've only your word for it.
Lupa : (*Laughing, a soft mirthless laugh*) : My word, my dear?
No, you have the assurance of the ages. Look at him for
yourself. What you took for princeliness and grandeur was
princely and was grand, but the princeliness came from the
knowledge that after me there will be no one ; and the grandeur
from the security of such a knowledge. The count was tired
when I married him, some twenty-odd
years ago. (*Holding out her hand with a generous movement,
not unalloyed with amusement*) : On my word of honor, my dear.

Fanny : Somehow—I feel—extremely
ridiculous, all of a sudden—it was so nice before,

Lupa : And will be again. You must
not despair ; you are a young and charming girl,
and you have one priceless quality —it's bound to take you far

Fanny: What?

Lupa : That : "See her first" impulse, very rare my dear, very rare.

Fanny : You are making fun of me.

Lupa : No, I'm putting you where you belong.

Fanny: Countess Lupa!

Lupa (*disregarding the interruption*) : Ahead of your time; you
were just a little inclined toward the wrong generation, that's all.

Fanny: What do you mean?

Lupa : That your future is assured, my dear. I have a son.

—

Fragment Forty-one

from The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Heliodora*, by Hilda Doolittle

... thou flittest to Andromeda.

SAPPHO

1

Am I blind alas,
am I blind?
I too have followed
her path.
I too have bent at her feet.
I too have wakened to pluck
amaranth in the straight shaft,
amaranth purple in the cup,
scorched at the edge to white.

Am I blind?
am I the less ready for her sacrifice?
am I the less eager to give
what she asks,
she the shameless and radiant?

Am I quite lost,
I towering above you and her glance,
walking with swifter pace,
with clearer sight,
with intensity
beside which you two
are as spent ash?

Nay, I give back to the goddess the gift
she tendered me in a moment
of great bounty.
I return it. I lay it again
on the white slab of her house,
the beauty she cast out
one moment, careless.

Nor do I cry out:
“why did I stoop?
why did I turn aside
one moment from the rocks

marking the sea-path?
Aphrodite, shameless and radiant,
have pity, turn, answer us."

Ah no--though I stumble toward
her altar-step,
though my flesh is scorched and rent,
shattered, cut apart,
slashed open;
though my heels press my own wet life
black, dark to purple,
on the smooth, rose-streaked
threshold of her pavement.

2

Am I blind alas, deaf too
that my ears lost all this?
nay, O my lover,
shameless and still radiant,
I tell you this:

I was not asleep,
I did not lie asleep on those hot rocks
while you waited.
I was not unaware when I glanced
out toward the sea
watching the purple ships.

I was not blind when I turned.
I was not indifferent when I strayed aside
or loitered as we three went
or seemed to turn a moment from the path
for that same amaranth.

I was not dull and dead when I fell
back on our couch at night.
I was not indifferent when I turned
and lay quiet.
I was not dead in my sleep.

3

Lady of all beauty,
I give you this:
say I have offered small sacrifice,
say I am unworthy your touch,

but say not:
“she turned to some cold, calm god,
silent, pitiful, in preference.”

Lady of all beauty,
I give you this:
say not:
“she deserted my altar-step,
the fire on my white hearth
was too great,
she fell back at my first glance.”

Lady, radiant and shameless,
I have brought small wreaths,
(they were a child’s gift,)
I have offered myrrh-leaf,
crisp lentisk,
I have laid rose-petal
and white rock-rose from the beach.

But I give now a greater,
I give life and spirit with this.
I render a grace
no one has dared to speak,
lest men at your altar greet him
as slave, callous to your art;
I dare more than the singer
offering her lute,
the girl her stained veils,
the woman her swathes of birth,
or pencil and chalk,
mirror and unguent box.

I offer more than the lad
singing at your steps,
praise of himself,
his mirror his friend’s face,
more than any girl,
I offer you this:
(grant only strength
that I withdraw not my gift,)
I give you my praise and this:
the love of my lover
for his mistress.

The Feathered Bridegroom

The Project Gutenberg eBook of
*The Lost Giant and Other American Indian
Tales Retold*, by Violet Moore Higgins

Long, long ago, before the coming of the white man to the shores of America, there lived, far up in the north country, near the banks of a broad river, a squaw named Speckled Eagle, with her little son Running Buffalo and her beautiful daughter Deerfoot, a maiden of fifteen.

Speckled Eagle was the widow of a great warrior and she determined that her daughter should never marry until there came to woo her some mighty chieftain of a powerful tribe. Many a young brave came to the tepee, for Deerfoot was as good as she was lovely. Many a one would have wed her, but none were ever rich or noble enough to please Speckled Eagle.

But one day as the family sat before its tent, weaving mats of sweet grass, a white canoe came gliding down the broad river, and in it there sat a handsome stranger. He was clad all in white, in garments made of deer-skin, sewed over with beads and shells and trimmed with ermine tails.

Speckled Eagle looked at him eagerly. Ah, if only he were coming to woo Deerfoot! As she watched, the stranger gave a few skillful strokes of his paddle that sent his canoe out of the current and brought it gliding toward the shore before Speckled Eagle's lodge. In another moment he was stepping out upon the pebbly shore.

All a-flutter with excitement Speckled Eagle went hurrying down to meet him, not forgetting in her haste to snatch up a bundle of bark which hung in the tepee. When she had greeted the strange brave and bade him welcome to her lodge, she spread pieces of the bark before him on the ground from the landing to the tepee, to do him honor. When he had reached the campfire, she begged him to rest on a soft pile of skins while she and her daughter prepared a feast for him.

Everyone in her camp was delighted with the handsome stranger--all but one old dog which growled and showed his teeth from the moment the unknown brave stepped ashore. The man trembled at the dog's angry snarls, and said he could not eat a bit of the feast until that ugly animal was taken away.

Anxious to please her noble guest, Speckled Eagle led the old dog out into the bushes and killed him, though she dared not tell Deerfoot what she had done, for the girl was fond of the faithful dog.

Soon the stranger made it known that he was a chieftain from the far

north, who had made a temporary camp down the river a few miles below Speckled Eagle's tepee. Furthermore he said that he wished to wed the lovely Deerfoot. The girl was so charmed by his handsome face, his well-built figure and splendid carriage that she consented at once.

Speckled Eagle was more than satisfied to have so fine a son-in-law. So a great wedding feast was held and Deerfoot married the strange brave that night.

On the following morning when Speckled Eagle was ready to make a fire, she went out into the bushes to get some dry faggots. There lay the body of the old dog she had killed, pecked full of holes as if a great bird had feasted on it. The soft earth round about was marked by strange three-toed prints.

A sudden fear came to Speckled Eagle's heart. She hurried back to the camp, and asked all present to take off their moccasins or shoes. All did as she bade--all but the stranger.

"I never take off my shoes," he said haughtily, "It is a custom of my tribe."

"But see the beautiful moccasins I have made for you," insisted Speckled Eagle. For many moons she had worked on them, intending them to be a wedding gift for her noble son-in-law, whenever he should appear. They were of the softest leather, heavily beaded and worked in quills of the porcupine, and the stranger's eyes began to glisten as he looked at them. Like a flash he whipped off his own moccasins, and put on the new ones before Speckled Eagle could see his feet. But the little brother's eyes were sharp.

"Mother," he cried in terror, "he has feet like a bird--he has only three toes."

At this the stranger grew angry and looked at the little boy so fiercely that he said no more, but Speckled Eagle was strangely troubled and felt that all was not right.

When they had breakfasted the stranger ordered his bride to follow him to his camp, far down the river, where he had many beautiful gifts for her. Deerfoot did not want to go. The incident of the moccasins had frightened her, but her husband promised her they should return by sundown, so at last she climbed into the stern of his canoe, while the stranger took his place at the bow, and they paddled away down stream.

Deerfoot looked back at the camp as long as she could see it, and watched Speckled Eagle and the little brother, Running Buffalo, waving to her from the shore. But at last a turn of the river hid them from view.

For several hours Deerfoot and her husband went on down the river with the current, he paddling, she giving an occasional stroke, where the stream did not run as fast as usual. About noon-day it began to rain, a shower at first, then a downpour. As the rain continued to fall harder and harder, the bride suddenly noticed that the water was washing away her husband's splendid white coat, and beneath it she could see black feathers and a long black tail.

Then she knew what evil had befallen her. She had married a Crow, the bird of wickedness, whose tricky ways oft deceived the Indians.

Deerfoot was very much frightened, but she began to plan her escape at once. With her small deft hands she tied the long black tail to the crossbar of the canoe, using a leather thong from her moccasins.

“What are you doing?” asked the Crow, as he felt her fingers among his feathers.

“Smoothing down your beautiful coat, and sewing on some of the beads that have become loosened,” she replied.

“Ah, I see you are industrious, as a good wife should be,” he answered with a sly grin, but without turning.

All the long afternoon they floated down the river, and as it drew on toward sunset the canoe glided along into a rushy, reed-covered marsh where the wild ducks made their nests. As the canoe slipped among the grasses, dozens of frightened birds rose in great flocks and flew across the marshes.

“These shores are full of duck eggs, husband,” said Deerfoot, as she watched the circling birds. Seized by a sudden idea she cried: “Let me land here for a moment, and I will soon find a dozen for your supper.”

Now the Crow was hungry, and the prospect of a dozen roasted duck eggs pleased him immensely.

“You are a good wife,” he said, “but make haste--we still have far to go,” and he ran the canoe close to the shore.

Before the keel had even grated on the pebbles, like the swift-footed deer for whom she was named, the Indian maid had sprung ashore and darted up the bank into the forest. She was soon out of sight speeding like an arrow through the woods, back to her mother, her brother, and her home.

The Crow gave a harsh cry, which resembled a caw, as he saw her go, and began screaming at the top of his voice: “Stop--stop--I'll bring you back, and punish you for this.”

But he could not free himself to follow her. Deerfoot had fastened his tail too securely to the crossbar for him to loosen it easily. It took him nearly an hour to untie the last knot, for it was no easy task to reach around behind his back, and, by the sense of touch alone, pick out countless knots tied in wet leather.

By the time the Crow had untied all the thongs that held him. Deerfoot was far away in the forest, so he sunk his canoe, resumed his bird shape once more and flew off screeching as he went: "Again I have tricked my enemy--man."

WE'RE OFF TO MARS!

By Carlton Furth

The strange little robot machine would create anything Joe Linger wanted. The catch was, that he was being told what to create--and didn't know it!

[Transcriber's Note: This PG etext was produced from
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September 1951

Extensive research did not uncover any evidence that
the U.S. copyright on this publication was renewed.]

Joe Linger raised up on one elbow and stared at the door, frowning.
"Who is it?" he called out.

A muffled voice answered from beyond the cracked, peeling wood.
"Package for Mr. Joseph Linger!"

"Just a minute!" Joe laid his magazine aside, rolled to the edge of the bed, and pulled on his trousers. Rising, he poked his feet into frayed slippers and, walking to the door, swung it open.

"Sign here, please!" A little, old man stood in the doorway. He held a large square package under one arm and extended the other, holding out a clipboard and pencil to Joe. He had a thatch of white hair and a red, wrinkled face with blue eyes and a scowl. He wore a loose, blue uniform with a cloth badge on his shallow chest, reading: Time Deliveries, Inc.

Joe took the clipboard and pencil, scrawled his name and frowned with sudden surprise.

The name on the clipboard list above his was:

Pontius Pilate, Rome, 12 A.D.

And when he looked up at the scowling little man who was now holding the package out to him and extending a hand to receive back his clipboard and pencil, Joe saw that he was holding the package out with two right arms and reaching for the clipboard with two left arms!

Joe fell back a step. "Who in blazes are you?"

"Time Deliveries, Incorporated," the little man chanted. "We guarantee deliveries to anyone, anywhere, any time. Here's your package, Mr. Linger."

"B-but," Joe stammered, "where'd you come from?"

The little man lifted his lower left hand and fingered his pointed chin. A gleam entered his blue eyes. "Originally, I came from Ursula Major," he said. "That's 3428 A.D., by the present calendar. Now, do you accept this package or--"

"I--I accept!" Joe blurted, grabbing for the package. In his haste, he dropped the clipboard and pencil, but four hands deftly snatched them up before they hit the floor.

"Very well," said the little man. "Good day, Mr. Linger!" He stepped back into the hallway and pulled the door shut.

Joe stood frozen with the large square package clutched to his chest. Then he lunged forward, wrenched at the doorknob, jerked the door open, and leaped out into the hall. "Hey-y-y-y!" his shout wavered off into weak dismay.

The hallway was empty.

* * * *

He reentered his room, closed and locked the door carefully, and walked over to his bed. His dazed eyes wandered to the window, to the dirty brick wall of the apartment house next door, to the shaft of blazing afternoon sunlight that struck the grimy windowpane. In broad daylight!

It had happened in broad daylight!

He sat on the bed, staring at the package in his lap. It was a light, bulky package, wrapped in some silvery gray substance that felt colder and smoother than rubber--more like metal. On one side of the package

was an inscription in large, bold script:

To: Mr. Joseph Linger
June 27th, 1951, Dark Ages Earth
24 Kens Street, Jersey City, N.J.
United States, North America

He wondered if it was a gag. But the little old man with four arms hadn't been a gag!

Finally, Joe opened the package. He merely inserted his thumb into a conspicuous slot at the corner and pushed it around the top edges. The silver-gray material parted easily and the lid came off the package. As it fell aside, he saw that the interior was filled with what resembled a rubber sponge soaked in black lacquer. It was dry, springy, and blackly glistening. He clutched at it and pulled it out.

Only a top layer came out. Beneath that, surrounded with layers of the cushioning substance, was-- something --and a folded sheet of glossy, white paper.

Joe took out the paper and read it.

Mr. Joseph Linger
June 27th, 1951, U.S.A.
Dark Ages Earth

Dear Mr. Linger :

We have chosen you to assist us in an important research project, because our investigation has found you to be a science fiction enthusiast. We believe you have a better chance of comprehending the scope of our research than would most people of your time.

As you may have suspected, time involves a countless number of varying probability universes, all coexisting in the same time dimension. It is much like a giant tree, with branches sprouting from the root--the very beginning of time--and subsequent branches sprouting from others; and so, on and on.

Our research teams have travelled successfully into the past. However, in attempting to return, they have been faced with innumerable branches in time-probability, with no way of determining which branch led to our universe!

Only a few have succeeded in returning--by recording the complete facts of history as they went into the past, then stopping and checking those facts every few years on their return. When the facts didn't check, they knew they were off on another branch

leading to another universe; they would back-track, try again, and check until they were on the right branch. _

_Even so, many members of our research teams died before they could return--and our average life-span is five thousand years! You may understand, then, that this is an intolerable situation that needs correcting. _

_The purpose of this project is to determine the amount of probability stress which causes a branch in time, this allowing us to check back and spot every moment that such branches occur! With that, we can compute the moments of stress and the number of branches in all time-probability! Consequently, our research teams may then travel safely to any time-era, in any probability universe, with a yard-stick which can always lead them back to our own universe. _

_And so, in order to measure the probability stress which causes time-branching, we have decided to introduce such stress ourselves. Enclosed is a product of our civilization. You would probably call it a robot. It should never have existed in your time; therefore, it will induce considerable stress upon probability. A branch in time should result, if not when the robot arrives, certainly when you make use of it. That, of course, is where you come in. _

_We have sent this robot because it will repay you many times over for your assistance in our project. We have scanners focused on your time, ready to record the branching and probability stress when it occurs. We ask only your cooperation. You may keep the robot, of course. _

_It will fashion any object you desire from surrounding matter--solid objects, air molecules, anything within a thousand yards of it--if you but type out the name and description of the desired object on its keyboard. Thus, if you wish an automobile, take the robot to a deserted road and type on its keyboard the word, "automobile." By influencing the sub-atomic forces of the dirt in the road, the empty air over the road, perhaps the grass along the side of the road, the robot will make you an automobile. _

_You may desire objects which do not exist in your time. If you type the word, spaceship, for example, be sure to include a description of its performance, range, amount of supplies, etc.--and be on a large, open field when you do so. _

_In conclusion, it might be wise to remember that illegal possession of wealth in your time is punishable by law. I trust, for your own sake, you will exercise the utmost discretion. _

Sincerely,
Myynor Skurle
Director, Historial Research
Galactic Renaissance, Sol III

* * * *

Joe put the letter carefully on the bed beside him and reached into the box for the robot. He lifted it out. It was a shimmering, silver-gray globe, lighter than aluminum, with one side of it flattened to accommodate a keyboard. It was about the size of a bowling ball, he guessed. The keyboard had small push-buttons, lettered exactly like a typewriter, with a small glass lens above it. He struck the "J" key and a tiny, glowing "J" appeared in the center of the lens. He punched the tab marked "clear" at the top of the keyboard, and the "J" vanished.

His mind reeled at the implications of what he had read. Anything he wanted was his, merely by typing its name on this keyboard! Even objects he only imagined, which didn't even exist--spaceships, antigravity devices, anything....

His thoughts were confused. What did he want? Money? But what good was money when he wouldn't have to buy anything? What did he want?

He felt a sudden, overwhelming desire to confide in someone--to ask someone--

He rested the globe in his lap, clutching it with moist, slippery palms. His vision was blurred, his hands fumbling, as he pecked at the keyboard:

TELEPHONE

There was a swirling glow of blue radiance, a faintly audible click from within the globe--then a loud, sharp crack and the smell of ozone!

A telephone rested on the bed beside him! Its black cord snaked across the floor to the baseboard beside the chipped dresser.

Joe relaxed with a shuddering sigh. He mopped at the sweat on his forehead with a wet palm--he had a telephone! The robot worked!

But did the telephone work? He reached over, lifted the receiver, and placed it to his ear. The dial-tone was unmistakable.

He replaced the receiver on its cradle and sat staring at the 'phone. Now that he had it, who would he call?

What did he really want?

He looked down at the robot in his lap and swallowed hesitantly. He had requested a telephone, so he got a telephone. But that wasn't what he wanted. He knew--the realization grew in his mind--what he really wanted, what any young guy would want, given the opportunity!

Feverishly, he clutched the robot in his lap and with a numb index finger, began pecking at the keyboard. He finished the phrase--then, hastily and with sudden apprehension, added a comma. His brow furrowed with intense concentration for a moment, then he resumed typing.

When he finished, the small, glowing letters beneath the lens read:

A BEAUTIFUL GIRL,
WHOM I CAN TRUST.

There was the swirling blue radiance, as before. He heard the faintly audible click from within the globe. His eyes shot around the room, expectantly. A vision flashed into his mind--a vision of the girl who would appear--young, with soft, dark hair tumbling to her shoulders, delicate features and a slender, lovely figure. A neat, immaculate suit would enhance her shapely curves. He waited....

Nothing happened. No sharp crack, no smell of ozone. The robot had failed!

Joe sighed dismally. Resignedly, he steadied the robot in his lap and reached his thumb for the "clear" button. Then he saw it.

The tiny, glowing letters beneath the lens were different! The words he'd typed out were no longer there!

In their stead, he read:

DELAWARE 6-2717,
ASK FOR BARBARA!

* * * *

He dialed the number.

"Hello?" a soft, feminine voice answered.

"Is this Barbara?" he asked.

"Yes. Who're you?"

"Joe Linger," he said. "Are you beautiful?"

"Why--I suppose so," came the modest answer. "What--"

"Can I trust you?" Joe persisted.

"Well, really!" she exclaimed. "Mr. Linger, I'm afraid I don't know you--"

Joe groaned inwardly. Of course they were strangers! The robot couldn't help that!

"Just--just what is it you want?" the girl's voice stammered from the receiver.

"Nothing," Joe replied wearily. "Nothing, now. Maybe I'll call you back."

He hung up and sat staring into space.

Anything he wanted--anything! Money? What use was money when he didn't have to buy anything? Food? What about food? Meat and vegetables weren't inanimate objects, either.

He set the bright globe in his lap and placed his fingertips on its keyboard. Swiftly, he typed: SIRLOIN STEAK SMOTHERED IN ONIONS, GRAVY, MASHED POTATOES, ASPARAGUS, TOAST, COFFEE, APPLE PIE A LA MODE.

There came the shimmering blue radiance, the faint click, the sharp crack, and the smell of ozone.

Across the room, there was a battered writing table with a glass and a chipped china pitcher half-filled with stale water. Glass and pitcher vanished; instead, there sat the complete dinner, not only as he had ordered it but cooked to perfection. Complete with dishes, silverware, salt-and-pepper shakers, coffee cream, sugar bowl--everything.

After he had eaten, Joe settled back and surveyed the dishes. How to get them washed? Furthermore, how to explain to Mrs. Haggerty, the landlady, that he had not been cooking in his room and what happened to her pitcher and glass?

He picked up the robot again and typed out: ONE PITCHER, ONE GLASS, BELONGING TO MRS. HAGGERTY.

With swirling blue radiance, faint click, sharp crack, and smell of ozone, the battered writing table resumed its former appearance.

Then he had his shoes changed into a cat. Afterwards, he had the cat changed back into new shoes. His two suits, brought out of the musty

closet, were changed to brilliant, cloth-of-gold togas: then, because togas were hardly practical, he changed them back into new, expensive suits. With that beginning, he proceeded to rejuvenate his entire wardrobe. He began adding to it, acquiring some much-needed extra linen and some much-desired sportsclothes, but the process had to be reversed when he noticed the wallpaper was disappearing from the walls, the closet was minus its door, and the air in the room was beginning to reek with ozone. Mrs. Haggerty would never stand for that!

And by sheer accident, he learned how to control the robot's influence on surrounding matter. When he had concluded that shoes were a more practical possession than a cat, he had accidentally typed the phrase: SHOES FROM THE CAT.

And--with the glow, click, crack, and ozone smell--the cat had become a new pair of shoes. If he hadn't mentioned the cat, the robot might have jerked out one of the dresser drawers and made it into a pair of new shoes....

He sat at the writing table, staring at the metal globe set before him. _It's like the Midas touch_, he mused reflectively. Old King Midas, sitting in his treasure rooms, watching gold coins dribble through his fingers; the old King had thought it would be wonderful if he could turn everything he touched into gold--until he could, and finally touched his young daughter--

* * * *

Joe pushed back his chair, and walked over to the bed. He sat down and lifted the telephone receiver. Swiftly, he dialed the Delaware number.

"Hello?" It was the soft, feminine voice again.

"Barbara?" His tone was uncertain.

"Yes. Who's this?"

"Joe Linger," he said. "Barbara, I know you've never met me, but I don't know anyone else who can help me. I've got to talk to someone--maybe if I could talk to you, I'd be able to work things out? Could--could I come over to see you?"

"Well-l-l-l," she replied doubtfully, "I really don't--"

"Is someone else there?" he asked anxiously. "Someone else in the family?"

"Do you want to speak to father?"

"Yes--please!"

"Just a minute--"

As he waited, Joe laid down the receiver and returned to the table for the robot. He brought it back to the bed, sat down, placed it in his lap, and swiftly typed out: BARBARA'S ADDRESS.

A gruff voice rattled faintly from the receiver. "Hello? Hello, who's this?"

There was a swirling blue glow and a click. Beneath the lens, at the top of the keyboard, was Barbara's address.

Joe picked up the receiver. "My name is Joe Linger," he said. "Sir, I don't know your name, but I thought I ought to see you. It's about something your daughter has become involved in without her knowledge. I thought you ought to know--"

"What?" The voice spoke sharply. "What're you talking about?"

"I'd rather not discuss it over the 'phone," Joe replied nervously. "Could I come over to see you, personally?"

"Why--um, ah--why, yes!" A hard edge crept into the voice. "Perhaps you'd better_!"

Joe felt a wave of relief. "I'll be there in fifteen minutes," he promised.

He was five minutes early. He parked the sleek, yellow convertible in the driveway and climbed out. He looked dapper and well-groomed in his dark, expensive suit as he went up the front steps and rang the doorbell. The round, gleaming globe of the robot was tucked under his arm.

The door was opened by a tall, stocky man with iron-gray hair. He raked Joe with a sharp, piercing gaze. "You're Mr. Linger?"

Joe nodded. "That's right. But I don't know your name."

"James Bowen," the man said stiffly. "Come in, Mr. Linger."

Joe hesitated, shook his head. "First, Mr. Bowen, I want to explain," he said. "I'm a stranger--your daughter has never met me--and yet, I was able to get her first name and telephone number. I thought you might like to know how I did that."

Bowen scowled darkly. "Well, please come in, Mr. Linger," he insisted

stiffly. "We'll sit down and discuss the matter--"

"No," Joe refused, shaking his head again. "I want to show you something, first. I want you to see exactly what this is all about--" He cradled the robot in his arm and began typing on its keyboard, turning to face the driveway as he did so.

Bowen stepped out the door and stared at Joe's yellow convertible. Then he jerked back, startled.

There was a swirling blue glow from the bright globe, a faint click. And then--

Crack!

* * * *

Bowen grabbed at the door, his eyes bulging as he stared out at the driveway. Air currents swirled and eddied across the front lawn. The convertible had vanished.

"This globe is a robot mechanism," Joe said hastily. "It transmuted the metal atoms of that car into molecules of air. It can change any matter into any shape, form, or object desired! Watch!" Swiftly, he began typing again.

The swirling glow and sound effects were repeated.

And in the driveway, poised gracefully on its tricycle landing gear, was a small, gleaming light plane!

"I made that out of air molecules, too," Joe explained. "That is, the robot made it."

"Get--get that airplane off my driveway!" Bowen stammered hoarsely. "The neighbors will--"

Joe typed busily. The glow and noise repeated. The plane disappeared.

"Now you've seen it," Joe said quietly, gazing up at the tall, dazed man. "This is what I want to talk to you about. I--I need help, Mr. Bowen--"

"Come in," Bowen said weakly. "Come in--but turn that god-forsaken thing off!" He turned and walked back into the house. "Atomic bombs, hydrogen bombs--and now, this! And I'd always thought they'd have rocket ships first--"

Joe followed him in through a short foyer to a small, comfortable

living room. Then, in the living room doorway, he stopped. He felt the breath go out of him in a long sigh, and an excited fluttering in his chest.

Barbara Bowen stood across the room, beside the front window. She had heard the noises, had seen what happened. She was pale and frightened. And she was beautiful. Soft, dark hair framed a peach oval of a face with large gray eyes, short nose, and perfect lips. A soft blue housecoat draped over a smoothly curved, long-limbed figure.

Bowen had crossed the room and settled into a comfortable chair, taking out his pipe and tobacco pouch. "Sit down, Mr. Linger," he offered, with a gesture to a nearby chair. "This is my daughter, Barbara."

"Hello," Barbara said simply. Her voice was a soft, husky sound.

Joe merely swallowed and nodded, then crossed hurriedly to the proffered chair. Barbara sat down on the couch.

Then, haltingly at first, but with a constantly growing familiarity, Joe told them everything that had happened. He took the letter from Myytnor Skurle out of his pocket and showed it to them.

For several minutes after he finished, Mr. Bowen sat smoking his pipe and staring into space.

"Have you tried making money with it, Mr. Linger?" he asked, pensively.

"No," Joe admitted. "There doesn't seem to be any need for me to have money."

Bowen rose with sudden decision and crossed to a low writing desk. He got a piece of paper and, after some searching, a small magnifying glass. Then he returned and laid the paper on the small coffee table. "There," he said. "Change that into some five-dollar bills."

Joe stared at the paper, frowning, then cradled the bright globe in his lap, and began typing. The usual effects followed.

The paper changed into four five-dollar bills.

Bowen picked them up and returned to the writing desk. He took out his wallet, extracted a five-dollar bill, and sat down. Carefully, he examined the robot's bills against his own.

* * * *

Minutes dragged past. Joe licked his lips nervously, noticed that Barbara was doing the same thing, and they stared at each other. Then

Barbara smiled, and he smiled, and--

"Mr. Linger," Bowen spoke sharply, "I want you to do something else--no, wait!" He rose and walked back to them. "Mr. Linger, let me try that robot thing!"

Joe glanced at Barbara, then mutely handed the globe to Bowen.

"Now," Bowen said, turning, "Barbara, get off the couch, will you?"

"Yes, father!" Barbara rose hurriedly.

"Um," said Mr. Bowen. He cradled the globe on his arm and pecked at the keyboard.

There was the swirling blue glow, the faint click--and a loud crack that rattled the windows. The air swirled about the room, reeking with ozone--

And where the couch had been was now an ugly, anti-tank cannon, squatting heavily on its rubber tires.

"Holy cow!" Joe exclaimed, jumping to his feet.

"Uh huh!" Bowen grunted, satisfied. He handed back the robot. "Now, if you please, Mr. Linger--give us back our couch! Can you?"

"Why--why, yes--" Joe stammered. He took the robot and changed Bowen's cannon back into the couch it had been.

"Uh huh!" Bowen grunted again. He settled into his chair and resumed smoking his pipe, calmly.

Joe returned to his seat, frowning perplexedly. Barbara moved back toward the couch--then hesitated, staring at it uncertainly, and moved over toward Joe's chair. Almost without thinking, she perched herself on the arm of his chair. Joe slipped his arm around her hips to steady her, and neither of them seemed to notice their nearness. They sat staring at her father.

Bowen stared into space, nodded, and grunted a few times. Finally, he cleared his throat and began speaking.

"Mr. Linger, the bills that robot made are perfect. You couldn't spot one of 'em for a counterfeit in a million years! And we've just discovered that not only will the robot make weapons, but anyone can work it--not just you! That puts a pretty serious light on the business. I'm thoroughly convinced, young man, that with that robot of yours, any man could become the ruler of the world!"

Joe gasped faintly. "That--that hadn't occurred to me!" he stammered weakly.

Bowen smiled at him with warm friendliness. "I didn't think it had," he said quietly. "But I'm afraid we're going to have to face facts. Joe, your life isn't going to be worth a plugged nickel if this ever gets out. Why, the moment you handed me that robot, I could've committed the perfect murder--by changing you into a statue!"

Joe shook his head. "The robot can't influence animate objects," he protested.

"Didn't you make a cat?" Bowen asked sharply.

Joe gulped nervously. Yes, he had! And he'd changed the cat back into new shoes--

"You mustn't deny the danger for a minute, Joe," Bowen went on, gravely. "If ever the wrong people hear about that robot and get their hands on it, you're as good as dead! And the rest of the world will shortly be under the killer's thumb--"

"Father--" Barbara blurted impulsively. "Father, can't we--help him, somehow?"

Bowen raised his brows and grinned at his daughter. "Maybe for your sake, we'd better!" he exclaimed, chuckling.

Barbara fidgeted with embarrassment.

"I've been wondering about the people who sent the robot to you," Bowen resumed seriously. "But it seems that they weren't interested so much in what the robot might do to our world as they were in getting their experiment done. So this seems to be left entirely in your hands, Joe." He glanced up, his gray eyes boring into Joe's face. "Do you want to make your own decision about it, or do you want us to make a suggestion?"

Joe ran his fingers through his hair, nervously. "I'd--I'd appreciate anything you say, Mr. Bowen! Anything!"

But in the back of his mind--even as Bowen began speaking again--Joe felt the beginnings of an idea, a decision that formed and grew and flooded into his whole being with the exhilaration of a drug! Even as Bowen began speaking, Joe knew what he was going to do--what he had to do--

* * * * *

The yellow convertible swung up over a shoulder and down the winding dirt road into a narrow valley. Ahead lay a small lake.

"Your summer cabin's on the south shore, you say?" Joe asked, tooling the big car down into the cool, tree-shaded lowland.

Bowen nodded, beside him. "I still think you ought to let me put my oxygen torch to that thing."

Joe grinned and slowed the car, whipping it off the road into a small clearing. A small, weatherbeaten cabin stood back among the pines. Beyond the clearing was the sandy shore and the lake.

"There's our cabin," Barbara acknowledged, as Joe headed the car toward it. He parked under the trees and they got out. He carried the bright globe under his arm.

"Well," Bowen said, facing him, "We're here, now. What is it you plan to do, Joe?"

Joe nodded toward the clearing. "I think I'd better do it out there," he said.

"It's wonderful up here on weekends," Barbara remarked, matching stride with them as they started toward the clearing. She was wearing brief shorts and a sweater, with a bright kerchief tied around her head.

"There's swimming and fishing and no one to bother us. Father's always wished he could build a home up here--"

Joe stopped, turning to her father. "Have you?"

Bowen nodded, frowning. "Always wanted a quiet, little place for the day I retire--"

"Just a minute, then!" Joe faced back toward the cabin and steadied the robot. Deftly, he began typing: SMALL HOUSE FROM CABIN FOR MR. BOWEN, ALL CONVENiences, FURNISHED.

There was the blue glow and faint click from the globe--then, a thunderous crash from the trees! A strong gust of wind whipped waves across the mirror-surface of the lake.

It was a small, white stucco house, with a low, rock wall extending around a garden in front. Bright flowers bloomed in the garden, vines climbed the trellises at the little windows. The roof was bright red tile. Bowen stared back at it, his face tight, his gray eyes misting.

"There," Joe said kindly. "That should fix you up."

"I--I didn't ask for it!" Bowen protested stubbornly. "I didn't earn it!"

"Oh, but you will!" Joe grinned brightly. "You're going to earn it by not telling anyone about what I'm going to do out here!" Chuckling softly, he turned and trudged on out toward the clearing.

Barbara caught up with him and tugged at his arm. "Joe," she pleaded. "Please, Joe! Don't do anything you'll be sorry for--"

Then they stopped at the clearing's edge. Joe cradled the robot on his arm, touched his fingers to the keyboard--and paused, silent for a moment. "I'll never be sorry for doing this!" he said, finally, and began typing.

* * * *

One minute, there was the small clearing, green grass waving gently in the warm afternoon sunshine. Then the very heavens seemed to split open and a giant thunderbolt came hurtling into the ground. The concussion almost knocked them off their feet.

And the next minute--

It was a long, silvery, torpedo-shaped hull, completely filling the small clearing. Rocket tubes jutted from its tapering tail; narrow fins creased its smooth flanks. A round airlock door stood open, waiting.

[Illustration: Joe raised the strange robot globe and depressed the keys. Out on the plain a space ship came into being.]

"A--A _rocket ship_!" Bowen gasped.

"More than that!" Joe was grinning as he moved out toward the open airlock. "She's equipped with water and air purifying devices and food synthesis tanks that'll supply one man as long as ten years! She has antigravity equipment that can lift her right off the Earth--and a rocket drive that'll accelerate to a velocity of two hundred and seventy-eight miles per second! That's roughly a million miles an hour! That means I can reach Mars' orbit in just over thirty hours!"

"But--but what're you going to do with it?" Barbara stammered.

"Do?" Joe leaped into the airlock, his robot clutched under his arm, and faced them with a laugh. "I'm going to the only place I'll be safe, Barbara! And I'll find out who built the canals on Mars! And what mysteries lie below the cloud-blanket of Venus! And whether any of the moons of Jupiter are inhabitable--"

"Y-you mean," Bowen sputtered, "you're going into space?"

Barbara shook her head. "But--not alone!"

A shadow flicked across Joe's young features. Then he grinned easily.
"Why not? I'm no longer safe among men--"

"But you can't go alone!" she stormed. "You--Father! I'm going with
him!"

"Barbara!" Bowen shouted. "What on earth--"

"Not on earth!" she cried, leaping forward. She landed in the narrow airlock, thrusting Joe back into its metal confines. She whirled back to her father, grabbing the door's levers to steady herself. "Not for long!" she added breathlessly. "Don't you see, father? He has to go--but he can't go alone! Someone has to be with him, to take care of him, to see that he eats his meals and--and I'm going with him! Goodbye, father! We'll--we'll be back!"

And tugging, panting, she swung the heavy door closed. It swung flush into the smooth, metal hull.

James Bowen stood transfixed, on the edge of the clearing. Behind him was the small, white house with the red roof and the little garden in front, as he watched the sleek, torpedo-shaped spaceship rise effortlessly from the ground and go skimming across the lake, climbing higher and higher until it dwindled to a silvery speck in the clear blue sky and vanished.

Then Bowen's face suddenly took on a new cast. There was a grim, satisfied light in his eyes as he followed the faint vapor trail up into the heavens. Slowly he reached a hand in his coat pocket. From it he withdrew a small metallic object. It was shaped oddly like a pocket radio, but of a more advanced and intricate design.

He depressed a small switch and the object glowed. About him there was the snap and crackle of powerful electrical forces. Bowen's voice suddenly sounded.

"Myynor Skurle reporting to Headquarters on project Time Stress."

There was a blue crackle in the air about him. Then a distant voice intoned: "What is your report?"

He stared up at the sky, smiling, now. "I have personally seen Joe Linger on his way. My daughter accompanies him on the experiment. She will remain with the Earthman for his lifetime, keeping us informed as

events progress. I believe she is attracted to him--however, that is a side issue, the main project having been successfully executed. Shall I return to Sol III?"

Again the blue crackle. "Our compliments, Myytnor Skurle. You may return."

The crackle faded and he made a further adjustment on the object he held. The smile was still on his face as he gazed into the sky after the space ship--and vanished....



Courtesy of M. Knoedler & Co.

BASQUE SAILORS
By Claggett Wilson

Illustration from Shadowland, Spring 1923

NAMBY PAMBY: OR, A PANEGYRIC ON THE NEW VERSIFICATION ADDRESSED TO A---- P----, ESQ.

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Burlesque Plays and Poems*, by
Henry Morley and Geoffrey Chaucer and George Villiers and John Philips and Henry Fielding

"Nauty Pauty Jack-a-dandy
Stole a piece of sugar-candy
From the Grocer's shoppy-shop,
And away did hoppy-hop."

All ye poets of the age,
All ye witlings of the stage,
Learn your jingles to reform:
Crop your numbers, and conform:
Let your little verses flow
Gently, sweetly, row by row.
Let the verse the subject fit,
Little subject, little wit.
Namby Pamby is your guide,
Albion's joy, Hibernia's pride.
Namby Pamby Pilli-pis,
Rhimy pim'd on missy-mis;
Tartarettar Tartaree
From the navel to the knee;
That her father's gracy-grace
Might give him a placy-place.
He no longer writes of mammy
Andromache and her lammy,
Hanging panging at the breast
Of a matron most distrest.
Now the venal poet sings
Baby clouts, and baby things,
Baby dolls and baby houses,
Little misses, little spouses;
Little playthings, little toys,
Little girls, and little boys.
As an actor does his part,
So the nurses get by heart
Namby Pamby's little rhymes,
Little jingle, little chimes.
Namby Pamby ne'er will die
While the nurse sings lullaby.
Namby Pamby's doubly mild,
Once a man, and twice a child;

To his hanging-sleeves restor'd,
Now he foots it like a lord;
Now he pumps his little wits,
All by little tiny bits.
Now methinks I hear him say,
Boys and girls, come out to play,
Moon does shine as bright as day.
Now my Namby Pamby's found
Sitting on the Friar's ground,
Picking silver, picking gold,
Namby Pamby's never old.
Bally-cally they begin,
Namby Pamby still keeps in.
Namby Pamby is no clown,
London Bridge is broken down:
Now he courts the gay ladee,
Dancing o'er the Lady-lee:
Now he sings of lick-spit liar
Burning in the brimstone fire;
Liar, liar, lick-spit, lick,
Turn about the candle-stick.
Now he sings of Jacky Horner
Sitting in the chimney corner,
Eating of a Christmas pie,
Putting in his thumb, oh, fie!
Putting in, oh, fie! his thumb,
Pulling out, oh, strange! a plum.
Now he acts the Grenadier,
Calling for a pot of beer.
Where's his money? he's forgot,
Get him gone, a drunken sot.
Now on cock-horse does he ride;
And anon on timber stride,
See-and-saw and Sacch'ry down,
London is a gallant town.
Now he gathers riches in
Thicker, faster, pin by pin.
Pins apiece to see his show,
Boys and girls flock row by row;
From their clothes the pins they take,
Risk a whipping for his sake;
From their frocks the pins they pull,
To fill Namby's cushion full.
So much wit at such an age,
Does a genius great presage.
Second childhood gone and past,
Should he prove a man at last,
What must second manhood be,
In a child so bright as he!

Guard him, ye poetic powers,
Watch his minutes, watch his hours:
Let your tuneful Nine inspire him,
Let poetic fury fire him:
Let the poets one and all
To his genius victims fall.

A WORD UPON PUDDING.

From "A LEARNED DISSERTATION UPON DUMPLING," to which the preceding Poem was appended.

What is a tart, a pie, or a pasty, but meat or fruit enclos'd in a wall or covering of pudding? What is a cake, but a bak'd pudding; or a Christmas pie, but a minc'd-meat pudding? As for cheese-cakes, custards, tansies, &c., they are manifest puddings, and all of Sir John's own contrivance; custard being as old, if not older, than Magna Charta. In short, pudding is of the greatest dignity and antiquity; bread itself, which is the very staff of life, being, properly speaking, a bak'd wheat pudding.

To the satchel, which is the pudding-bag of ingenuity, we are indebted for the greatest men in church and state. All arts and sciences owe their original to pudding or dumpling. What is a bagpipe, the mother of all music, but a pudding of harmony? Or what is music itself, but a palatable cookery of sounds? To little puddings or bladders of colours we owe all the choice originals of the greatest painters. And indeed, what is painting, but a well-spread pudding, or cookery of colours?

The head of man is like a pudding. And whence have all rhymes, poems, plots, and inventions sprang, but from that same pudding? What is poetry, but a pudding of words? The physicians, tho' they cry out so much against cooks and cookery, yet are but cooks themselves; with this difference only, the cooks' pudding lengthens life, the physicians' shortens it. So that we live and die by pudding. For what is a clyster, but a bag-pudding? a pill, but a dumpling? or a bolus, but a tansy, tho' not altogether so toothsome? In a word: physic is only a puddingizing or cookery of drugs.

*The law is but a
cookery of quibbles and contentions, [64] * * **
* * * * * * * * * *
* * * * is but a pudding of * * * *
* * * * * * * * * *
* * * Some swallow everything whole and unmix'd;

so that it may rather be call'd a heap than a pudding. Others are so

squeamish, the greatest mastership in cookery is requir'd to make the pudding palatable. The suet which others gape and swallow by gobs, must for these puny stomachs be minced to atoms; the plums must be pick'd with the utmost care, and every ingredient proportion'd to the greatest nicety, or it will never go down.

The universe itself is but a pudding of elements. Empires, kingdoms, states and republics, are but puddings of people differently made up. The celestial and terrestrial orbs are decipher'd to us by a pair of globes or mathematical puddings.

The success of war and fate of monarchies are entirely dependent on puddings and dumplings. For what else are cannonballs but military puddings? or bullets, but dumplings; with this difference only, they do not sit so well on the stomach as a good marrow pudding or bread pudding.

In short, there is nothing valuable in art or nature, but what, more or less, has an allusion to pudding or dumpling. Why, then, should they be held in disesteem? Why should dumpling-eating be ridiculed, or dumpling-eaters derided? Is it not pleasant and profitable? Is it not ancient and honourable? Kings, princes, and potentates have in all ages been lovers of pudding. Is it not, therefore, of royal authority? Popes, cardinals, bishops, priests and deacons, have, time out of mind, been great pudding-eaters. Is it not, therefore, a holy and religious institution? Philosophers, poets, and learned men in all faculties, judges, privy councillors, and members of both houses, have, by their great regard to pudding, given a sanction to it that nothing can efface. Is it not, therefore, ancient, honourable, and commendable?

Quare itaque fremuerunt Auctores?

Why do, therefore, the enemies of good eating, the starveling authors of Grub Street, employ their impotent pens against pudding and pudding-headed, alias honest men? Why do they inveigh against dumpling-eating, which is the life and soul of good-fellowship; and dumpling-eaters, who are the ornaments of civil society?

But, alas! their malice is their own punishment. The hireling author of a late scandalous libel, intituled, "The Dumpling-Eaters Downfall," may, if he has any eyes, now see his error, in attacking so numerous, so august, a body of people. His books remain unsold, unread, unregarded; while this treatise of mine shall be bought by all who love pudding or dumpling; to my bookseller's great joy, and my no small consolation. How shall I triumph, and how will that mercenary scribbler be mortified, when I have sold more editions of my books than he has copies of his? I, therefore, exhort all people, gentle and simple, men, women, and children, to buy, to read, to extol these labours of mine, for the honour of dumpling-eating. Let them not fear to defend every article; for I will bear them harmless. I have arguments good store, and can easily confute,

either logically, theologically, or metaphysically, all those who dare oppose me.

Let not Englishmen, therefore, be ashamed of the name of Pudding-eaters; but, on the contrary, let it be their glory. For let foreigners cry out ne'er so much against good eating, they come easily into it when they have been a little while in our land of Canaan; and there are very few foreigners among us who have not learn'd to make as great a hole in a good pudding, or sirloin of beef, as the best Englishman of us all.

Why should we then be laughed out of pudding and dumpling? or why ridicul'd out of good living? Plots and politics may hurt us, but pudding cannot. Let us, therefore, adhere to pudding, and keep ourselves out of harm's way; according to the golden rule laid down by a celebrated dumpling-eater now defunct:

"Be of your patron's mind, whate'er he says:
Sleep very much; think little, and talk less;
Mind neither good nor bad, nor right nor wrong;
But eat your pudding, fool, and hold your tongue."--PRIOR.

FOOTNOTES:

[Footnote 64: The cat ran away with this part of the copy, on which the Author had unfortunately laid some of Mother Crump's sausages.]

MORE ABOUT WASHINGTON

from Project Gutenberg's *Bill Nye's Sparks*, by Edgar Wilson Nye

|WASHINGTON, D.C. I Have just returned from a polite and recherche party here.

Washington is the hot-bed of gayety, and general headquarters for the recherche business. It would be hard to find a bontonger aggregation than the one I was just at, to use the words of a gentleman who was there, and who asked me if I wrote "The Heathen Chinee."

He was a very talented man, with a broad sweep of skull and a vague yearning for something more tangible--to drink. He was in Washington, he said, in the interests of Mingo county. I forgot to ask him where Mingo county might be. He took a great interest in me, and talked with me long after he really had anything to say. He was one of those fluent conversationalists frequently met with in society. He used one of these

web-perfecting talkers--the kind that can be fed with raw Roman punch and that will turn out punctuated talk in links, like varnished sausages. Being a poor talker myself and rather more fluent as a listener, I did not interrupt him.

He said that he was sorry to notice how young girls and their parents came to Washington as they would to a matrimonial market.

I was sorry also to hear it. It pained me to know that young ladies should allow themselves to be bamboozled into matrimony. Why was it, I asked, that matrimony should ever single out the young and fair?

"Ah," said he, "it is indeed rough!"

He then breathed a sigh that shook the foliage of the speckled geranium near by, and killed an artificial caterpillar that hung on its branches.

"Matrimony is all right," said he, "if properly brought about. It breaks my heart, though, to notice how Washington is used as a matrimonial market. It seems to me almost as if these here young ladies were brought here like slaves and exposed for sale." I had noticed that they were somewhat exposed, but I did not know that they were for sale.

I asked him if the waists of party dresses had always been so sadly in the minority, and he said they had.

I danced with a beautiful young lady whose trail had evidently caught in a doorway. She hadn't noticed it till she had walked out partially through her costume. I do not think a lady ought to give too much thought to her apparel, neither should she feel too much above her clothes. I say this in the kindest spirit, because I believe that man should be a friend to woman. No family circle is complete without a woman. She is like a glad landscape to the weary eye. Individually and collectively, woman is a great adjunct of civilization and progress. The electric light is a good thing, but how pale and feeble it looks by the light of a good woman's eyes. The telephone is a great invention. It is a good thing to talk at and murmur into and deposit profanity in, but to take up a conversation and keep it up and follow a man out through the front door with it, the telephone has still much to learn from woman.

It is said that our government officials are not sufficiently paid, and I presume that is the case, so it became necessary to economize in every way, but, why should wives concentrate all their economy on the waist of a dress? When chest protectors are so cheap as they now are, I hate to see people suffer, and there is more real suffering, more privation and more destitution, pervading the Washington scapula and clavicle this winter than I ever saw before.

But I do not hope to change this custom, though I spoke to several

ladies about it, and asked them to think it over. I do not think they will. It seems almost wicked to cut off the best part of a dress and put it at the other end of the skirt, to be trodden under feet of men, as I may say. They smiled good humoredly at me as I tried to impress my views upon them, but should I go there again next season and mingle in the mad whirl of Washington, where these fair women are also mingling in said mad whirl, I presume that I will find them clothed in the same gaslight waist, with trimmings of real vertebræ down the back.

Still, what does a man know about the proper costume for woman? He knows nothing whatever. He is in many ways a little inconsistent. Why does a man frown on a certain costume for his wife and admire it on the first woman he meets? Why does he fight shy of religion and Christianity and talk very freely about the church, but get mad if his wife is an infidel?

Crops around Washington are looking well. Winter wheat, crocusses and indefinite postponements were never in a more thrifty condition. Quite a number of people are here who are waiting to be confirmed. Judging from their habits, they are lingering around here in order to become confirmed drunkards.

I leave here to-morrow with a large, wet towel in my plug hat. Perhaps I should have said nothing on this dress reform question while my hat is fitting me so immediately. It is seldom that I step aside from the beaten path of rectitude, but last evening, on the way home, it seemed to me that I didn't do much else but step aside. At these parties no charge is made for punch. It is perfectly free. I asked a colored man who stood near the punch bowl, and who replenished it ever and anon, what the damage was, and he drew himself up to his full height.

Possibly I did wrong, but I hate to be a burden on any one. It seemed odd to me to go to a first-class dance and find the supper and the band and the rum all paid for. It must cost a good deal of money to run this government.

WILD OATS FOR WIVES

Project Gutenberg's *Modern marriage and how to bear it*, by Maud Churton Braby

'Nothing that is worth saying is proper.' --G. BERNARD SHAW.

'I don't believe in the existence of Puritan women. I don't think there is a woman in the world who would not be a little flattered if one made love to her. It is that which makes woman so irresistibly adorable.' --OSCAR WILDE.

If there be any readers whose susceptibilities are shocked by this headline, they are respectfully requested--nay, commanded--to read no further. If there be any whose susceptibilities waver without as yet experiencing any actual shock, they are affectionately asked--nay, implored--to re-read several times the above quotation from Mr Shaw's immortal *Candida*, to thereupon pull themselves together and take the plunge. I can promise them it won't be anything like as terrible as they half hope--in fact its essential propriety will probably disappoint them bitterly!

Curiously enough, though women are more anxious to marry than men, and do everything in their power to achieve what men often strive to resist--after marriage it is generally the woman who is most discontented. Of late years a spirit of strange unrest has come over married women, and they frequently rebel against conditions which our grandmothers would never have dreamed of murmuring at. There are a variety of causes for this: one that marriage falls short of women's expectations, as I said in the opening chapter, another that they have had no *feminine* wild oats. Please note the qualifying adjective, duly italicised, and do not attempt to misunderstand me. I am no advocate of the licence generally accorded to men being extended to women.

'Wild oats' of this nature, otherwise an ante-hymeneal 'fling,' was certainly not a necessity of our grandmothers, but a certain (fairly numerous) type of modern women seem to make better wives when they have reaped this harvest. Take for example the cases of Yvonne and Yvette which are personally known to me. Yvette was engaged at eighteen and married at twenty-one. At the age of twenty-six she was the mother of four children. She had scarcely time to realise what youth meant and begin to enjoy it before her girlhood was stifled under the responsibilities of marriage and maternity. She had accepted her first offer, and he was practically the only man she knew anything of. Beyond him she had seen nothing of men, or of the world; certainly she had never flirted or had men friends or enjoyed any admiration but that of her *fiancé*.

At twenty-six Yvette began to realise that she had been cheated out of a very precious part of life and an invaluable experience. Though a fairly happy wife and a devoted mother, she felt that she might have had those lost delights as well as the domestic joys, and the knowledge enraged her.

A dangerous spirit of curiosity entered her heart, and a still more dangerous longing for adventure and excitement. She realised that there were other men in the world who admired her besides her Marcus, and that she was pretty and still quite a young woman. At thirty Yvette was a mistress of the art of intrigue--had engineered several dangerous affaires, and might have come to serious grief had not Marcus been a singularly wise, tender, and understanding husband.

‘It isn’t that I don’t love him dearly,’ she confided in me when resolving to turn over a new leaf. ‘I wouldn’t exchange him for anyone in the world, and you know what the children are to me--but somehow I want something else as well--some excitement. I feel I’ve had no fun in my life, and I wanted to have a fling before it was too late. When I was engaged I scarcely ever even danced with anyone but Marcus, and for the first four years of my married life I had a baby every eighteen months--it was nothing but babies, nursing the old one and getting ready for the new one! Not that I didn’t love it, but the reaction was bound to come, and it did. If only I could have had the excitement and the gaiety and the glamour first, and then married when I was about twenty-five, I should have been perfectly satisfied then, like Yvonne!’

Yvonne certainly managed her affairs better. Fate saved her from the misfortune of falling in love too soon. She always had a train of admirers, and was enabled to enjoy the power of her womanhood to the full; she travelled, made delightful friendships with both sexes, learnt to know the world and acquired a philosophy of life. When she married, at twenty-nine, she had seen enough of other men to know exactly the kind of husband she wanted, and had had enough excitement to make her appreciate the peace and calm of matrimony.

The secrets of many wives lie heavily on my soul as I write, and more than one woman, with some real reason for remorse, has confided in me that it was only that fatal desire for excitement that primarily caused her undoing. I shall instruct my son to be sure to marry a woman who has got her wild oats safely over, or select a wife of the more old-fashioned type who does not require them. With the modern temperament they must almost inevitably come sooner or later, and to what extent the modern temperament will have evolved by the time the Boy of Boys is marriageable, the ironical gods alone know!

Bachelors take note! A woman--new style--who has knocked about over half the world and sown a mild crop of the delectable cereal will prove a far better wife, a more cheery friend and faithful comrade than the girl of

more or less the same type_ whose first experience you are, and who will make enormous claims on your love and patience by reason of her utter ignorance of men. You will possibly even have to live up to an ideal founded on novel-reading, and that you will find very wearing, my friend! The experienced woman knows men so thoroughly, she will expect nothing more of you than you can give her, and will appreciate your virtues to the utmost and make the best of your vices. 'But she has flirted so outrageously,' you say? Well, so much the better, she is less likely to do it after marriage. 'But, hang it all, she has been kissed by other men,' you say? Well then, she has no need for further experiences of this kind and is not likely ever to give her lips again to others once she is yours. . . . How can you be sure? That is one of the innumerable risks of marriage. How can she be sure that your last crop is sown, still less reaped? . . . Oh, my dear man, you really make me very angry--do for heaven's sake try and get away from conventional ideas of right and wrong! Judge things for yourself, and as they would seem, say, at the edge of an active volcano! . . . All the things we fuss so much about would doubtless quickly assume their real value if viewed from this perilous situation.

And even in the sad cases where a woman has sown real wild oats in the man's sense of the word, how different the little moral rules and regulations which we keep for these occasions would appear in the face of an immediate and violent death. I heard not long ago of a very sad story which bears this out. A man very narrowly escaped death from drowning, shortly after he had broken his engagement with a girl he genuinely loved, on her confessing to him that, many years before, she had once yielded to the importunities of a passionate lover. I do not know what were his emotions in the awful moment when the waters closed over him, and he was experiencing that horrible fight for breath which those who have known it describe as the most terrible sensation conceivable. Apparently his hairbreadth escape from death tore from his eyes the swathings of conventional opinion with which he had been blinded. Instead of regarding himself as a deeply wronged man he realised that he had behaved horribly to the unfortunate girl, who had thus been doubly outraged by his sex. He sought her at once and begged to be taken back again, but she happened to be a woman of some spirit, and she refused to trust herself to a man of such narrow views, and given to such harsh judgment.

Of course this treatment increased his love a thousandfold. It obsessed him to a painful degree, and in the end his desperate entreaties prevailed on her deep affection for him and she relented. Their marriage was not very happy, as may be imagined; they both loved to madness and the ghost of that dead passion stood ever between them, an invisible, poisonous presence that killed their joy in each other. After a time a deep melancholy settled on the woman, and she allowed some trifling illness to take such a hold on her that it caused her death.

When she was dying, I am told, she said to her faithful friend: 'If ever you meet another woman who has made one little slip--a thing which at the time seemed so natural and inevitable as not to be sin at all--tell her never never to confess it to the man she is going to marry, least of all if she loves him. If that confession doesn't part them altogether, it will always be between them. One does it wishing to be straight, but it's the most dreadful mistake a woman can make.'

Her wish to be straight had cost this poor woman not only her whole life's happiness, and her very life itself, but the happiness of the man she loved, in whose interests she had made the confession that wrought the harm. 'How dearly I have paid! how dearly I have paid!' she used to say over and over again in her last illness.

This is an absolutely true story, and it seems to me a burning injustice that a woman should suffer so bitterly for what would be absolutely disregarded in a man. I have no doubt there are many similar cases, and emphatically I say that such confessions are ill-advised. The ordinary conventional-thinking man placed in these circumstances would either throw a woman over, or marry her against his convictions. The extraordinary masculine code, for some reason beyond my feminine powers of comprehension, will not admit that a spinster who has had a lover, or even made one 'false step,' is a fit person to wed, though no man would object to marrying a widow, and many men take respondent divorcées to wife.

Even in the case of a rarely generous-minded, tolerant and understanding man, who judged the offence at its true computation, such knowledge would only prove disturbing and a source of insecurity to conjugal happiness. No good purpose of any kind can be served, and the ease which confession is proverbially supposed to gain for the sinner would be bought at a very heavy price.

'But two wrongs don't make a right, and surely it can't be proper for a woman to deceive a man on such a vital point,' the stern moralist may exclaim. Possibly not, according to the strictly ideal standard of ethics; but, viewed from the larger standpoints of life and of commonsense, this 'deceit' would appear to be advisable. And be assured, my unpleasant moralist (I'm sure you are an unpleasant person), that the sinner will not get off 'scot free,' as you seem to fear. Many and many a stab will be her portion, for memory is a potent poison, and every expression of love and trust from her husband will most likely carry its own special sting, whilst the round, innocent eyes of adoring little children, to whom she is a being that can do no wrong, will be a meet punishment for an infinitely greater fault. Meanwhile the man is in all probability in every way a gainer by the woman's silence, for doubtless he is doubly dear to her for the very fact that the first man treated her badly, and she may perhaps be a better wife, a stronger and sweeter woman, a more capable mother, by reason of the suffering she has

undergone.

Now let no maliciously obtuse person attribute to me the pernicious doctrine that a woman with a past is the best wife for a man. I merely say that a good woman who has surrendered herself to an ardent lover and been afterwards deserted by him must necessarily have gone through such intense suffering that her character is probably deepened thereby and her capacity for love and faithfulness increased. It is another truism that suffering is necessary to bring out the best qualities in women.

Men too should keep the details of their wild oats severely to themselves. In married life there are bound to be secrets and the happiest couples are those who know how to keep them, each to him or her self. A very good motto for the newly betrothed would be that of Tom Broadbent in *John Bull's Other Island* --‘Let us have no tellings--perfect confidence, but no tellings: that's the way to avoid rows!’

PORTRAIT
from the Internet Archive etext of
BODY OF THIS DEATH
POEMS
By LOUISE BOGAN

She has no need to fear the fall
Of harvest from the laddered reach
Of orchards, nor the tide gone ebbing
From the steep beach.

Nor hold to pain's effrontery
Her body's bulwark, stern and savage,
Nor be a glass, where to forsee
Another's ravage.

What she has gathered, and what lost,
She will not find to lose again.
She is possessed by time, who once
Was loved by men.

The History of the Dolphin

By Ashley Montagu

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *The Dolphin in History*, by
Ashley Montagu and John C. Lilly

I have met with a story, which, although authenticated by undoubted evidence, looks very like a fable.

—Pliny the Younger—

The history of the dolphin is one of the most fascinating and instructive in the historiography and the history of ideas in the western world. Indeed, it provides one of the most illuminating examples of what has probably occurred many times in human culture—a virtually complete loss of knowledge, at least in most segments of the culture, of what was formerly well understood by generations of men. “Not in entire forgetfulness” in some regions of the world, but certainly in “a sleep and a forgetting” in the most sophisticated centers of the western world.

Dolphins are mammals. They belong in the order Cetacea, suborder Odontoceti, family Delphinidae. Within the Delphinidae there are some twenty-two genera and about fifty-five species. The count includes the Killer Whale, the False Killer Whale, the White Whale, and the Pilot Whale, all of which are true dolphins. There are two subfamilies, the Delphinapterinae, consisting of the two genera Monodon monocerus, the Narwhal, and Delphinapterus leucas, the White Whale or Beluga. These two genera are distinguished by the fact that none of the neck vertebrae are fused, whereas in all remaining genera, embraced in the subfamily Delphininae, at least the first and second neck vertebrae are fused.

It was Aristotle in his History of Animals (521b) who first classified whales, porpoises, and dolphins as Cetacea, τὰ κῆτη οἷον δελφίς καὶ φωκαίνα καὶ φάλαινα. Aristotle’s account of the Cetacea was astonishingly accurately written, and quite evidently from firsthand knowledge of these animals.

While most dolphins are inhabitants of the seas, there are some that live in rivers, and quite a few that are denizens of fresh-water rivers removed many miles from the sea. With one exception the diet of dolphins is principally fish. The one exception is Sotalia teuszii, which lives in the Kamerun River, and is believed to feed exclusively on vegetable matter. The Ting Ling dolphin (Lipotes vexillifer) lives in Ting Ling Lake, six hundred miles up the Yang-tse-Kiang. Another dolphin, the Susu or Ganges dolphin (Platanista gangetica) of Brahmapootra, the Ganges, and the Indus, has lenseless eyes and is almost blind. The fresh-water dolphins belong in the family Platanistidae.

It is of interest to note that, in connection with the vegetable feeding habits of the Kamerun dolphin, Lycophron, in his *Alexandra*, makes his dolphins feed on trees, and Ovid, in the *Metamorphoses* (III, 1, 202), describes a flood in which the dolphins take possession of the woods. Nonnus Panopolitanus, in the *Dionysiaca* (VI, 265-266), also describes dolphins as feeding on trees.

The normal range of length of dolphins is from 5 to 14 feet; the larger species, the whales, are considerably longer. Brain weight is between 1600 and 1700 grams in the familiar dolphins, and reaches 9200 grams and more in the whales. The large brain is associated with what, all observers familiar with these animals agree, is a quite considerable intelligence.

Here we must pause to make a plea for the proper usage of common names. The term "porpoise" refers to the small, beakless Delphinidae, which have a triangular dorsal fin and spade-shaped teeth. The name "dolphin" embraces all other members of the family, except the larger forms, which are called whales. The porpoises mostly belong in the genus *Phocaena*, the best known species of which, the Common Porpoise (*Phocaena phocaena*), never reaches a length exceeding 6 feet and weighs 100 to 120 pounds. There are some six species. The finless black porpoise constitutes the only other genus with a single species *Neomeris phocaenoides*.

All porpoises are dolphins. The Bottle-Nosed Dolphin, *Tursiops truncatus*, is sometimes called a porpoise. This is incorrect. *Tursiops* is a true dolphin, and should not be called what it is not.

Here we shall be principally concerned with the Bottle-Nosed Dolphin and with the Common Dolphin. The Bottle-Nosed Dolphin has a short, well-defined snout two or three inches long, and is characterized by a prominent fin in the middle of the back. Coloration is dark above and light below. Gestation lasts some ten months, birth is monotocous, and the young are suckled for about 18 months. The tail is delivered first, and the infant, about three feet long and weighing about twenty-five pounds, is immediately quite active, though much in need of the care of its devoted mother. The infant will eventually grow to be between 11 and 12 feet in length, and weigh about 300 kilograms. *Tursiops* has an enormously wide range, being commonest along the Atlantic coast of America, from Maine to Florida, and occurs in the Bay of Biscay, in the Mediterranean Sea, and as far south as New Zealand.

The Common Dolphin, *Delphinus delphis*, is readily recognized by its well-defined narrow beak and distinctive coloration. The beak is some 5 to 6 inches narrower and finer than in the Bottle-Nosed Dolphin, and is sharply marked off by a deep V-shaped groove from the low reclining forehead. The Common Dolphin reaches a length up to 8½ feet. Its range

of distribution is very wide, for it may be met in any temperate or warm sea throughout the world, and occurs at times in vast schools.

Whether the dolphin of classical antiquity is Delphinus or Tursiops is not usually determinable, although each undoubtedly played its independent role in the stories told of dolphins. From the recorded evidence available to us it is clear that, except for the larger species, the whales, all dolphins appear to be characterized by playfulness and friendliness toward man. There are, however, differences which appear to express themselves mostly in captivity. At least, Tursiops adjusts much better to captivity than does Delphinus. At marine studios Tursiops has established itself as a highly intelligent, playful, and friendly performer. Delphinus, on the other hand, while naturally all these things, in captivity tends to be timid and not very playful.

The Common and Bottle-Nosed Dolphins are those best known to the western world, but many of the traits which have recently been rediscovered concerning these creatures have been well known to other peoples for millennia. It is only a certain segment of the western world, its more sophisticated representation, and particularly the learned world, which dismissed as myths the tales told about dolphins in classical antiquity. And this is the real burden of the story I have to tell you. Some of these antique tales may have been myths, but as we shall see, many of them were not, and undoubtedly a number of the myths were based on real events partially embroidered by the imagination and improved, like good wine, by time. But good wine needs no bush, and I shall sample this wine as palatably as I find it.

The earliest representation of a dolphin I have been able to find is from a pictographic seal from Crete, estimated to date from 3500 to 2200 B.C. The earliest painting of a dolphin thus far recovered is from the ancient Peloponnesian city of Tiryns. The date is about 1600 B.C. In that city it is also represented in stucco floors. Several good examples of dolphins are furnished by seventh century Corinthian art. The dolphin is also well represented in Minoan art. In Cyprus it is frequently represented in Late Helladic vases, shards, amphorae, in metalwork, engravings, and in stucco floors as at Tiryns. Among the importations from Crete into Helladic art appear to have been certain stylized forms of the dolphin.

An early literary reference to the dolphin occurs in Aesop's fable, "The Monkey and the Dolphin." During a violent storm a ship was capsized, and among those thrown into the water was a monkey. Observing its distress a dolphin came to its rescue, and taking the monkey upon its back the dolphin headed for shore. Opposite Piraeus, the harbor of Athens, the dolphin inquired of the monkey whether he was an Athenian. "Oh, yes," replied the monkey, "and from one of the best families." "Then you know Piraeus," said the dolphin. "Very well, indeed," said the monkey, "he is

one of my most intimate friends." Whereupon, outraged by so gross a deceit, the dolphin took a deep dive and left the monkey to its fate.

I take it that ever since that day monkeys have very sensibly refrained from speech. It is far better to remain silent even at the risk of being taken for a fool or a rogue, than to open one's mouth and remove all doubt.

Aesop flourished about 600 B.C. His story suggests a considerable knowledge of the ways of dolphins, and this indicates that knowledge of the dolphin was already old in his time.

There are several variant Greek myths on the origin of the dolphin. All of them relate to Dionysos. In one version Dionysos is an adult, in another he is a child. The first group of legends represent the epiphany of Dionysos, symbolizing the battle between winter and summer. Winter is represented by the death of Dionysos who disappears into the water, from which he is brought back on the top of a dolphin as the returning springtime (Apollodorus, III, 5, 3). Another version has Dionysos, whether as child or adult varies, being conveyed by ship to Naxos by Tyrrhenian mariners. The latter conceive the idea of kidnaping him. Dionysos senses their treachery, and bidding his companions strike up on their musical instruments, he produces a Bacchic wild dance in the mariners who throw themselves overboard and are changed into dolphins.

The popular belief in antiquity in the human intelligence of dolphins and their kindly feeling toward man was explained by the ancient writers in the light of the transformation of the Tyrrhenian pirates into dolphins. (See Lucian, *Marine Dialogues*, 8; Oppian, *Halieutica*, I, 649-654, 1098, V, 422, 519f; Porphyry, *De Abstinentia*, III, 16.) As Oppian (I, 1089) in his *Halieutica* has it, in William Diaper's charming translation:

So *Dolphins* teem, whom subject Fish revere,
And show the smiling Seas their Infant-Heir.
All other Kinds, whom Parent-Seas confine,
Dolphins excell; that Race is all divine.
Dolphins were Men (Tradition hands the Tale)
Laborious Swains bred on the *Tuscan* Vale:
Transform'd by *Bacchus*, and by *Neptune* lov'd,
They all the Pleasures of the Deep improv'd.
When new-made Fish the God's Command obey'd,
Plung'd in the Waves, and untry'd Fins displayed,
No further Change relenting *Bacchus* wrought,
Nor have the *Dolphins* all the Man forgot;
The conscious Soul retains her former Thought.

The god of the golden trident who rules over the seas, Poseidon, would not have prospered in his wooing of Amphitrite if it had not been for

the assistance of a dolphin, who apprized Poseidon of her hiding-place. For this service, as is well-known, Poseidon set the dolphin among the stars in the constellation which bears its name to this day.

It is interesting in this connection that in a modern Greek folktale from Zacynthos, Poseidon changes a hero who has fallen into the sea into a dolphin until such time as he should find a maiden ready to be his wife. After some time the dolphin rescues a shipwrecked king and his daughter, the princess by way of reward takes him for her husband, and the spell is broken (Bernhard Schmidt, *Das Volksleben der Neugriechen*, p. 135).

The cult of Apollo Delphinus was initiated, so legend has it, by Icadius who, leaving his native land of Lycia, which he had named for his mother, set out for Italy. Shipwrecked on the way, he was taken on the back of a dolphin, which set him down near Mount Parnassus, where he founded a temple to his father Apollo, and called the place Delphi after the dolphin. For this reason the dolphin became among the things most sacred to Apollo (Servius, *Commentarii in Vergilii Aeneidos*, III, 332; also Cornificius Longus, *De Etymis Deorum*).

Herodotus, writing of Periander (fl. 600 B.C.) tyrant of Corinth, tells one of the most famous of all stories of the dolphin (it is mentioned by Shakespeare in the first act of *Twelfth Night*). "In his time," writes Herodotus (b. 484 B.C.), "a very wonderful thing is said to have happened. The Corinthians and the Lesbians agree in their account of the matter. They relate that Arion of Methymna, who, as a player on the lyre, was second to no man living at that time, and who was, so far as we know, the first to invent the dithyrambic measure, to give it its name, and to conduct in it at Corinth, was carried to Taenarum on the back of a dolphin.

"He had lived, it is said, at the court of Periander, when a longing came upon him to sail across to Italy and Sicily. Having made rich profits in those parts, he wanted to recross the seas to Corinth. He therefore hired a vessel, the crew of which were Corinthians, thinking that there was no people in whom he could more safely confide; and, going on board, he set sail from Tarentum. The sailors, however, when they reached the open sea, formed a plot to throw him overboard and seize upon his riches. Discovering their design, he fell on his knees, beseeching them to spare his life, and making them welcome to his money. But they refused; and required him either to kill himself outright, if he wished for a grave on the dry land, or without loss of time to leap overboard into the sea. In this strait Arion begged them, since such was their pleasure, to allow him to mount upon the quarter-deck, dressed in his full costume, and there to play and sing, and promising that, as soon as his song was ended, he would destroy himself. Delighted at the prospect of hearing the very best singer in the world, they consented, and withdrew from the stern to the middle of the vessel: while Arion

dressed himself in the full costume of his calling, took his lyre, and standing on the quarter-deck, chanted the Orthian [a very high-pitched lively and spirited song]. His strain ended, he flung himself, fully attired as he was, headlong into the sea. The Corinthians then sailed on to Corinth. As for Arion, a dolphin, they say, took him upon his back and carried him to Taenarum, where he went ashore, and thence proceeded to Corinth in his musician's dress, and told all that had happened to him. Periander, however, disbelieved the story, and put Arion in ward, to prevent his leaving Corinth, while he watched anxiously for the return of the mariners. On their arrival he summoned them before him and asked them if they could give him any tidings of Arion. They returned for answer that he was alive and in good health in Italy, and that they had left him at Tarentum, where he was doing well. Thereupon Arion appeared before them, just as he was when he jumped from the vessel: the men, astonished and detected in falsehood, could no longer deny their guilt. Such is the account which the Corinthians and Lesbians give; and there is to this day at Taenarum an offering of Arion's at the shrine, which is a small figure in bronze, representing a man seated upon a dolphin." (*The History of Herodotus*, Clio, I, 23-24.)

Commenting on this tale the poet Bianor, in *The Greek Anthology* (*Declamatory Epigrams*, 308), remarks, "So the sea presumably contains fish whose righteousness exceeds that of mankind."

Coins of Methymna, in Lesbos, Arion's birthplace, show him riding a dolphin. In one form or another the dolphin is represented on the coins of some forty Greek cities, and doubtless most Greeks knew the reason why.

Pliny the Elder, in his *Natural History* (IX, 8, 24-28), writes as follows:

"The dolphin is an animal that is not only friendly to mankind but is also a lover of music, and it can be charmed by singing in harmony, but particularly by the sound of the water-organ. It is not afraid of a human being as something strange to it, but comes to meet vessels at sea and sports and gambols round them, actually trying to race them and passing them even when under full sail. In the reign of the late lamented Augustus a dolphin that had been brought into the Lucrine Lake fell marvellously in love with a certain boy, a poor man's son, who used to go from the Baiae district to school at Pozzuoli, because fairly often the lad when loitering about the place at noon called him to him by the name of Snubnose and coaxed him with bits of the bread he had with him for the journey,—I should be ashamed to tell the story were it not that it has been written about by Maecenas and Fabianus and Flavius Alfius and many others,—and when the boy called to it at whatever time of day, although it was concealed in hiding, it used to fly to him out of the depth, eat out of his hand, and let him mount on its back, sheathing as it were the prickles of its fin, and used to carry him when

mounted right across the bay to Pozzuoli to school, bringing him back in similar manner, for several years, until the boy died of disease, and then it used to keep coming sorrowfully and like a mourner to the customary place, and itself also expired, quite undoubtedly from longing. Another dolphin in recent years at Hippo Diarrhytus on the coast of Africa similarly used to feed out of people's hands and allow itself to be stroked, and play with swimmers and carry them on its back. The Governor of Africa, Flavianus, smeared it all over with perfume, and the novelty of the scent apparently put it to sleep: it floated lifelessly about, holding aloof from human intercourse for some months as if it had been driven away by insult; but afterwards it returned and was an object of wonder as before. The expense caused to their hosts by persons of official position who came to see it forced the people of Hippo to destroy it. Before these occurrences a similar story is told about a boy in the city of Iasus, with whom a dolphin was observed for a long time to be in love, and while eagerly following him to the shore when he was going away it grounded on the sand and expired; Alexander the Great made the boy head of the priesthood of Poseidon at Babylon, interpreting the dolphin's affection as a sign of the deity's favour. Hegesidemus writes that in the same city of Iasus another boy also, named Hermias, while riding across the sea in the same manner lost his life in the waves of a sudden storm, but was brought back to the shore, and the dolphin confessing itself the cause of his death did not return out to sea and expired on dry land. Theophrastus records that exactly the same thing occurred at Naupactos too. Indeed there are unlimited instances: the people of Amphilocus and Taranto tell the same stories about boys and dolphins; and these make it credible that also the skilled harper Arion, when at sea the sailors were getting ready to kill him with the intention of stealing the money he had made, succeeded in coaxing them to let him first play a turn on his harp, and the music attracted a school of dolphins, whereupon he dived into the sea and was taken up by one of them and carried ashore at Cape Matapan."

A very similar but apparently quite independent account of these stories is given by the younger Pliny, in his *Letters* (IX, 23).

The elder Pliny then goes on to tell of the manner in which dolphins assist fishermen, which corresponds closely with the accounts given by recent observers of this cooperative activity between fishermen and dolphins. (For accounts of these see Antony Alpers, *Dolphins*, 146 sq.)

There are numerous other stories similar to those given by the Plinys from classical antiquity, but it is quite impossible to recount them here.^[1] What they all have in common is the friendliness of the dolphin for human beings, their rescue of them when they were thrown into the sea, their playfulness, especially with children, and their interest in almost any sort of sound. All these traits came to be regarded as mythical by later and more sophisticated ages, and Usener (*Die Sintfluthsagen*) comments on the effect that the prevalence of these

tales had even upon the scientific thought of antiquity, making it difficult for such thinkers as Aristotle to get away from the belief in the dolphin's ability to carry a rider, and in its capacity for human feeling (Aristotle, *History of Animals*, 631a). But Aristotle was right and Herr Usener wrong. The delightful thing about most of these myths is that they all appear to be based on solid fact, and not on the fancies attributed to the original narrators. Another typical modern gloss by a highly sophisticated writer, biologically not unknowledgeable, Norman Douglas, is the following: Commenting on the delphic mythology, he writes, "From these and many other sources, we may gather that there was supposed to exist an obscure but powerful bond of affection between this animal and humanity, and that it was endowed with a certain kindheartedness and man-loving propensity. This is obviously not the case; the dolphin cares no more about us than cares the haddock. What is the origin of this belief? I conjecture that the beast was credited with these social sentiments out of what may be called poetic reciprocation. Mankind, loving the merry gambols and other endearing characteristics of the dolphin, which has a playful trick of escorting vessels for its own amusement, whose presence signified fair weather, and whose parental attachment to its offspring won their esteem—quite apart from its fabled, perhaps real, love of music or at least of noisy sounds—were pleased to invest it with feelings akin to their own. They were fond of the dolphin; what more natural and becoming than that the dolphin should be fond of them?" (*Birds and Beasts of the Greek Anthology*, p. 161.)

But Douglas was undisillusionedly wrong, and the dolphins are right, and so is the "mankind" that believed in their friendliness. Though pleased to see the dolphins play, it is to be regretted that Douglas did not mind his compass and his way, for:

Had the courteous Dolphins heard
One note of his, they would have dar'd
To quit the waters, to enjoy
In banishment such melody.

John Hall, 1646.

In order to avoid any imputation that I may be attempting to play Euhemerus[2] to the dolphin's tale, the facts may be allowed to speak for themselves—always remembering that facts never speak for themselves, but are at the mercy of their interpreters. All, then, that I am concerned to show here, by citing the contemporary evidence, is that, in essence, the so-called myths of the ancients were based on solid facts of observation and not, as has hitherto been supposed, on the imaginings of mythmakers.

Let us begin with a brief account of the most recent and most thoroughly documented story of a free-dwelling dolphin's social interaction with human beings. This is the story of Opo, a female *Tursiops* that made its appearance early in 1955 at Opononi, a small township just outside

the mouth of Hokianga Harbour, on the western side of the North Island of New Zealand. From allowing itself at first to be rubbed with an oar or mop carried on the fishermen's launches, it began to glide in near the beach among the bathers. The cheerful putt-putt of a motor-launch or of an outboard motor was an irresistible attraction for Opo, and she would follow the boat like a dog, playing or cruising round it. If she had an urge to wander, starting up the motor would invariably draw her back again. Mr. Piwai Toi, a Maori farmer, who was the first to observe Opo, writes, "She was really and truly a children's playmate. Although she played with grownups she was really at her charming best with a crowd of children swimming and wading. I have seen her swimming amongst children almost begging to be petted. She had an uncanny knack of finding out those who were gentle among her young admirers, and keeping away from the rougher elements. If they were all gentle then she would give of her best." (Antony Alpers, The Dolphin, pp. 228-229.)

The child the dolphin favored was a thirteen-year-old girl named Jill Baker. At fourteen Jill wrote the following account of her experience with Opo:

"I think why the dolphin became so friendly with me was because I was always gentle with her and never rushed at her as so many bathers did. No matter how many went in the water playing with her, as soon as I went in for a swim she would leave all the others and go off side-by-side with me. I remember on one occasion I went for a swim much further up the beach than where she was playing, and I was only in the water a short while when she bobbed up just in front of my face and gave me such a fright. On several other occasions when I was standing in the water with my legs apart she would go between them and pick me up and carry me a short distance before dropping me again. At first she didn't like the feel of my hands and would dart away, but after a while when she realized I would not harm her she would come up to me to be rubbed and patted. She would quite often let me put little children on her back for a moment or two." (In Antony Alpers, The Dolphin, p. 229.)

Opo's choice of the gentle Jill Baker for the rides which she gave this thirteen-year-old, suggests not only a sensitive discrimination of the qualities of human beings, but also that the reports of similar incidents which have come down to us from antiquity were based on similarly observed events. The one element in these stories which seemed most difficult to accept, and which is so often represented in ancient art, the boy riding on the back of a dolphin, is now removed from the realm of fancy and placed squarely in the realm of fact. It has been corroborated and sustained.

Mr. Antony Alpers in his book on the dolphin, and especially that part devoted to the eyewitness accounts of Opo's behavior, goes far toward establishing the fact of the dolphin's remarkable capacity for rapport with human beings. But for those striking facts I must recommend you to

Mr. Alper's charming book.

The dolphin's extraordinary interest in and, what we will I am sure not be far wrong in interpreting as, concern for human beings, is dramatically told by George Llano in his report *Airmen Against the Sea*. This report, written on survival at sea during the Second World War, records the experience of six American airmen, shot down over the Pacific, who found themselves in a seven-man raft being pushed by a porpoise toward land. Unfortunately the land was an island held by the Japanese. The friendly porpoise must have been surprised and hurt when he found himself being dissuaded from his pushing by being beaten off with the oars of the airmen.

Dr. Llano also reports that "Most observers noted that when porpoises appeared sharks disappeared, and they frequently refer to the 'welcome' appearance of porpoises, whose company they preferred to that of sharks." This confirms all earlier reports that sharks are no match for the dolphin kind.

Dolphins have been known to push a mattress quite empty of human beings for considerable distances at sea. Possibly it is merely the pushing that interests them, and not the saving of any human beings that might be atop of them.

Is there any evidence that dolphins save drowning swimmers? There is.

In 1945 the wife of a well-known trial attorney residing in Florida was saved from drowning by a dolphin.[3] This woman had stepped into a sea with a strong undertow and was immediately dragged under. Just before losing consciousness, she remembers hoping that someone would push her ashore. "With that, someone gave me a tremendous shove, and I landed on the beach, face down, too exhausted to turn over ... when I did, no one was near, but in the water almost eighteen feet out a porpoise was leaping around, and a few feet beyond him another large fish was also leaping."

In this case the porpoise was almost certainly a dolphin and the large fish a fishtail shark. A man who had observed the events from the other side of a fence told the rescued woman that this was the second time he had seen a drowning person saved by a "porpoise."

More recently, on the night of February 29, 1960, Mrs. Yvonne M. Bliss of Stuart fell from a boat off the east coast of Grand Bahama Island in the West Indies.[4] "After floating, swimming, shedding more clothing for what seemed an eternity, I saw a form in the water to the left of me.... It touched the side of my hip and, thinking it must be a shark, I moved over to the right to try to get away from it.... This change in my position was to my advantage as heretofore I was bucking a cross tide and the waves would wash over my head and I would swallow a great deal

of water. This sea animal which I knew by this time must be a porpoise had guided me so that I was being carried with the tide.

“After another eternity and being thankful that my friend was keeping away the sharks and barracuda for which these waters are famous, the porpoise moved back of me and came around to my right side. I moved over to give room to my companion and later knew that had not the porpoise done this, I would have been going downstream to deeper and faster moving waters. The porpoise had guided me to the section where the water was the most shallow.

“Shortly I touched what felt like fish netting to my feet. It was seaweed and under that the glorious and most welcome bottom.

“As I turned toward shore, stumbling, losing balance, and saying a prayer of thanks, my rescuer took off like a streak on down the channel.”

The reader must be left to make what he can of such occurrences. Dr. George G. Goodwin of the American Museum of Natural History doubts the intention of dolphins to save drowning persons.[5] “Anything floating,” he writes, “on or near the surface of the sea will attract his attention. His first action on approaching the object of his curiosity is to roll under it. In doing so, something partly submerged, like the body of a drowning person, is nudged to the surface of the water. The sea does its part and automatically drives floating objects toward the beach.” This may well be so in some cases, but it is an explanation which does not fit the incidents described by Mrs. Bliss, in which she was not pushed but guided. Occam’s razor should not be too bluntly applied.

The cooperativeness of dolphins with fishermen in various parts of the world has gone on for several thousand years without its significance having registered much upon the consciousness of the rest of the world—including the learned and the scientific.

In the Mediterranean from the earliest days, as recorded by Aelian in his *On the Characteristics of Animals*, VI, 15, to the present day, torchlight fishing with the aid of dolphins has been a traditional way of fishing. This has been described by Nicholas Apostolides in his book *La Pêche en Grèce*, who tells how fishermen of the Sporades catch their garfish “in the darkest nights of the month of October” by methods very similar to those described by Aelian. Briefly, the fish attracted by the fishermen’s flares begin to collect, whereupon the dolphins appear and drive them into the fishermen’s nets.

Similar methods of fishing were practiced in the Antipodes, off the New Zealand and Queensland coasts. The aborigines of Moreton Bay, Queensland, used to catch mullet with the aid of dolphins, at a place

appropriately enough called Amity Point. The aborigines recognized individual dolphins and called them by name. With their nets ready on the beach the aborigines waited for a shoal of fish to appear, whereupon they would run down and make a peculiar splashing in the water with their spears, and the dolphins on the outside of the shoal would drive the fish towards the nets for the aborigines to catch. Fairholme, who described these events in 1856, writes, "For my part I cannot doubt that the understanding is real, and that the natives know these porpoises [actually the dolphin *Tursiops catalania*], and that strange porpoises would not show so little fear of the natives. The oldest men of the tribe say that the same kind of fishing has always been carried on as long as they can remember. Porpoises abound in the bay, but in no other part do the natives fish with their assistance."

The Irrawaddy River dolphin is also an assistant-fisherman. John Anderson reports that "The fishermen believe that the dolphin purposely draws fish to their nets, and each fishing village has its particular guardian dolphin which receives a name common to all the fellows of his school; and it is this superstition which makes it so difficult to obtain specimens of this Cetacean. Colonel Sladen has told me that suits are not infrequently brought into the native courts to recover a share in the capture of fish, in which a plaintiff's dolphin has been held to fill the nets of rival fishermen." (John Anderson, *Account of the Zoological Results of Two Expeditions to Western Yunnan*.)

The Pink-Bellied river dolphin (*Inia geoffrensis*) of the Trapajós, a tributary of the Amazon, also helps its human friends with fishing. Dr. F. Bruce Lamb[6] says that this dolphin, locally known as the *boto*, "is reported to have saved the lives of helpless persons whose boats have capsized, by pushing them ashore. None of the dreaded flesh-eating *piranhas* appear when a porpoise is present, for they themselves would be eaten." And he goes on to give an eye-witness account of fishing with the aid of a trained dolphin. "My curiosity was aroused," he writes, "by the paddler, who began tapping on the side of the canoe with his paddle between strokes and whistling a peculiar call. Asking Rymundo about this, he startled me by casually remarking that they were calling their *boto*, their porpoise.... As we approached the fishing grounds near the riverbank, Rymundo lit his carbide miner's lamp, adjusted the reflector, chose his first harpoon, and stood up in the bow ready for action. Almost immediately on the offshore side of the canoe about 50 feet from us we heard a porpoise come up to blow and take in fresh air." The porpoise then chased the fish toward the canoe and Rymundo harpooned them with ease.

Many ancient writers have referred to the brilliancy of the changeful colors when the dolphin is dying. Byron makes reference to this in "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage,"

"Parting day

Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues
With a new colour as it gasps away;
The last still loveliest, till 'tis gone, and
 all is gray."

Here is a peculiar confusion, for this is not the mammalian dolphin of which we have been speaking, but the swift piscivorous oceanic fish *Coryphaena hippurus*, the dolphin of sailors. It is blue with deeper spots, and gleaming with gold. It is, indeed, famous for the beauty of its changing colors when dying. The mammalian dolphin exhibits no such spectacular color changes when dying.

Happily, it is not with dying dolphins or with *their* changing colors that we are concerned here, but rather with ours, the changing color of the complexion of our once too sophisticated beliefs. Beliefs which, in their own way, were very much more in the nature of myths than the ancient ones which we wrote off a little too disdainfully as such. The history of the dolphin constitutes an illuminating example of the eclipse of knowledge once possessed by the learned, but which was virtually completely relegated to the outermost fringes of mythology during the last eighteen hundred years. Perhaps there is a moral to be drawn here. If so, I shall leave it to others to draw. But now that scientific interest in the dolphin has been aroused we are entering into a new era of delphinology, and with the confirmation of so many of the observations of the ancients already made, we may look forward with confidence to others. Dolphins have large brains; possibly they will some day be able to teach us what brains are really for.

THE TROPICS IN NEW YORK

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Bananas ripe and green, and ginger-root,
Cocoa in pods and alligator pears,
And tangerines and mangoes and grape fruit,
Fit for the highest prize at parish fairs,

Set in the window, bringing memories
Of fruit-trees laden by low-singing rills,
And dewy dawns, and mystical blue skies
In benediction over nun-like hills.

My eyes grew dim, and I could no more gaze;
A wave of longing through my body swept,
And, hungry for the old, familiar ways,
I turned aside and bowed my head and wept.



RIDERS TO THE SEA

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

By J. M. Synge

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INTRODUCTION

It must have been on Synge's second visit to the Aran Islands that he had the experience out of which was wrought what many believe to be his greatest play. The scene of "Riders to the Sea" is laid in a cottage on Inishmaan, the middle and most interesting island of the Aran group.

While Synge was on Inishmaan, the story came to him of a man whose body had been washed up on the far away coast of Donegal, and who, by reason of certain peculiarities of dress, was suspected to be from the island.

In due course, he was recognised as a native of Inishmaan, in exactly the manner described in the play, and perhaps one of the most poignantly vivid passages in Synge's book on "The Aran Islands" relates the incident of his burial.

The other element in the story which Synge introduces into the play is equally true. Many tales of "second sight" are to be heard among Celtic races. In fact, they are so common as to arouse little or no wonder in the minds of the people. It is just such a tale, which there seems no valid reason for doubting, that Synge heard, and that gave the title, "Riders to the Sea", to his play.

It is the dramatist's high distinction that he has simply taken the materials which lay ready to his hand, and by the power of sympathy woven them, with little modification, into a tragedy which, for dramatic irony and noble pity, has no equal among its contemporaries. Great tragedy, it is frequently claimed with some show of justice, has perforce departed with the advance of modern life and its complicated tangle of interests and creature comforts. A highly developed civilisation, with its attendant specialisation of culture, tends ever to lose sight of those elemental forces, those primal emotions, naked to wind and sky, which are the stuff from which great drama is wrought by

the artist, but which, as it would seem, are rapidly departing from us. It is only in the far places, where solitary communion may be had with the elements, that this dynamic life is still to be found continuously, and it is accordingly thither that the dramatist, who would deal with spiritual life disengaged from the environment of an intellectual maze, must go for that experience which will beget in him inspiration for his art. The Aran Islands from which Synge gained his inspiration are rapidly losing that sense of isolation and self-dependence, which has hitherto been their rare distinction, and which furnished the motivation for Synge's masterpiece. Whether or not Synge finds a successor, it is none the less true that in English dramatic literature "Riders to the Sea" has an historic value which it would be difficult to over-estimate in its accomplishment and its possibilities. A writer in The Manchester Guardian shortly after Synge's death phrased it rightly when he wrote that it is "the tragic masterpiece of our language in our time; wherever it has been played in Europe from Galway to Prague, it has made the word tragedy mean something more profoundly stirring and cleansing to the spirit than it did."

The secret of the play's power is its capacity for standing afar off, and mingling, if we may say so, sympathy with relentlessness. There is a wonderful beauty of speech in the words of every character, wherein the latent power of suggestion is almost unlimited. "In the big world the old people do be leaving things after them for their sons and children, but in this place it is the young men do be leaving things behind for them that do be old." In the quavering rhythm of these words, there is poignantly present that quality of strangeness and remoteness in beauty which, as we are coming to realise, is the touchstone of Celtic literary art. However, the very asceticism of the play has begotten a corresponding power which lifts Synge's work far out of the current of the Irish literary revival, and sets it high in a timeless atmosphere of universal action.

Its characters live and die. It is their virtue in life to be lonely, and none but the lonely man in tragedy may be great. He dies, and then it is the virtue in life of the women mothers and wives and sisters to be great in their loneliness, great as Maurya, the stricken mother, is great in her final word.

"Michael has a clean burial in the far north, by the grace of the Almighty God. Bartley will have a fine coffin out of the white boards, and a deep grave surely. What more can we want than that? No man at all can be living for ever, and we must be satisfied." The pity and the terror of it all have brought a great peace, the peace that passeth understanding, and it is because the play holds this timeless peace after the storm which has bowed down every character, that "Riders to the Sea" may rightly take its place as the greatest modern tragedy in the English tongue.

EDWARD J. O'BRIEN.

February 23, 1911.

RIDERS TO THE SEA

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

First performed at the Molesworth Hall, Dublin, February 25th, 1904.

PERSONS

MAURYA (an old woman)..... Honor Lavelle

BARTLEY (her son)..... W. G. Fay

CATHLEEN (her daughter).... Sarah Allgood

NORA (a younger daughter).. Emma Vernon

MEN AND WOMEN

SCENE.

--An Island off the West of Ireland. (Cottage kitchen, with nets, oil-skins, spinning wheel, some new boards standing by the wall, etc. Cathleen, a girl of about twenty, finishes kneading cake, and puts it down in the pot-oven by the fire; then wipes her hands, and begins to spin at the wheel. NORA, a young girl, puts her head in at the door.)

NORA [In a low voice.]

Where is she?

CATHLEEN She's lying down, God help her, and may be sleeping, if she's able.

[Nora comes in softly, and takes a bundle from under her shawl.]

CATHLEEN [Spinning the wheel rapidly.]

What is it you have?

NORA The young priest is after bringing them. It's a shirt and a plain stocking were got off a drowned man in Donegal.

[Cathleen stops her wheel with a sudden movement, and leans out to listen.]

NORA We're to find out if it's Michael's they are, some time herself will be down looking by the sea.

CATHLEEN How would they be Michael's, Nora. How would he go the length of that way to the far north?

NORA The young priest says he's known the like of it. "If it's Michael's they are," says he, "you can tell herself he's got a clean burial by the grace of God, and if they're not his, let no one say a word about them, for she'll be getting her death," says he, "with crying and lamenting."

[The door which Nora half closed is blown open by a gust of wind.]

CATHLEEN [Looking out anxiously.]

Did you ask him would he stop Bartley going this day with the horses to the Galway fair?

NORA "I won't stop him," says he, "but let you not be afraid. Herself does be saying prayers half through the night, and the Almighty God won't leave her destitute," says he, "with no son living."

CATHLEEN Is the sea bad by the white rocks, Nora?

NORA Middling bad, God help us. There's a great roaring in the west, and it's worse it'll be getting when the tide's turned to the wind.

[She goes over to the table with the bundle.]

Shall I open it now?

CATHLEEN Maybe she'd wake up on us, and come in before we'd done.

[Coming to the table.]

It's a long time we'll be, and the two of us crying.

NORA [Goes to the inner door and listens.]

She's moving about on the bed. She'll be coming in a minute.

CATHLEEN Give me the ladder, and I'll put them up in the turf-loft, the way she won't know of them at all, and maybe when the tide turns she'll be going down to see would he be floating from the east.

[They put the ladder against the gable of the chimney; Cathleen goes up a few steps and hides the bundle in the turf-loft. Maurya comes from the inner room.]

MAURYA [Looking up at Cathleen and speaking querulously.]

Isn't it turf enough you have for this day and evening?

CATHLEEN There's a cake baking at the fire for a short space. [Throwing down the turf] and Bartley will want it when the tide turns if he goes to Connemara.

[Nora picks up the turf and puts it round the pot-oven.]

MAURYA [Sitting down on a stool at the fire.]

He won't go this day with the wind rising from the south and west. He won't go this day, for the young priest will stop him surely.

NORA He'll not stop him, mother, and I heard Eamon Simon and Stephen Pheety and Colum Shawn saying he would go.

MAURYA Where is he itself?

NORA He went down to see would there be another boat sailing in the week, and I'm thinking it won't be long till he's here now, for the tide's turning at the green head, and the hooker' tacking from the east.

CATHLEEN I hear some one passing the big stones.

NORA [Looking out.]

He's coming now, and he's in a hurry.

BARTLEY [Comes in and looks round the room. Speaking sadly and quietly.]

Where is the bit of new rope, Cathleen, was bought in Connemara?

CATHLEEN [Coming down.]

Give it to him, Nora; it's on a nail by the white boards. I hung it up this morning, for the pig with the black feet was eating it.

NORA [Giving him a rope.]

Is that it, Bartley?

MAURYA You'd do right to leave that rope, Bartley, hanging by the boards [Bartley takes the rope]. It will be wanting in this place, I'm telling you, if Michael is washed up to-morrow morning, or the next morning, or any morning in the week, for it's a deep grave we'll make him by the grace of God.

BARTLEY [Beginning to work with the rope.]

I've no halter the way I can ride down on the mare, and I must go now quickly. This is the one boat going for two weeks or beyond it, and the fair will be a good fair for horses I heard them saying below.

MAURYA It's a hard thing they'll be saying below if the body is washed up and there's no man in it to make the coffin, and I after giving a big price for the finest white boards you'd find in Connemara.

[She looks round at the boards.]

BARTLEY How would it be washed up, and we after looking each day for nine days, and a strong wind blowing a while back from the west and south?

MAURYA If it wasn't found itself, that wind is raising the sea, and there was a star up against the moon, and it rising in the night. If it was a hundred horses, or a thousand horses you had itself, what is the price of a thousand horses against a son where there is one son only?

BARTLEY [Working at the halter, to Cathleen.]

Let you go down each day, and see the sheep aren't jumping in on the rye, and if the jobber comes you can sell the pig with the black feet if there is a good price going.

MAURYA How would the like of her get a good price for a pig?

BARTLEY [To Cathleen]

If the west wind holds with the last bit of the moon let you and Nora get up weed enough for another cock for the kelp. It's hard set we'll be from this day with no one in it but one man to work.

MAURYA It's hard set we'll be surely the day you're drownd'd with the rest. What way will I live and the girls with me, and I an old woman looking for the grave?

[Bartley lays down the halter, takes off his old coat, and puts on a newer one of the same flannel.]

BARTLEY [To Nora.]

Is she coming to the pier?

NORA [Looking out.] She's passing the green head and letting fall her sails.

BARTLEY [Getting his purse and tobacco.]

I'll have half an hour to go down, and you'll see me coming again in two days, or in three days, or maybe in four days if the wind is bad.

MAURYA [Turning round to the fire, and putting her shawl over her head.]

Isn't it a hard and cruel man won't hear a word from an old woman, and she holding him from the sea?

CATHLEEN It's the life of a young man to be going on the sea, and who would listen to an old woman with one thing and she saying it over?

BARTLEY [Taking the halter.]

I must go now quickly. I'll ride down on the red mare, and the gray pony'll run behind me. . . The blessing of God on you.

[He goes out.]

MAURYA [Crying out as he is in the door.]

He's gone now, God spare us, and we'll not see him again. He's gone now, and when the black night is falling I'll have no son left me in the world.

CATHLEEN Why wouldn't you give him your blessing and he looking round in the door? Isn't it sorrow enough is on every one in this house without your sending him out with an unlucky word behind him, and a hard word in his ear?

[Maurya takes up the tongs and begins raking the fire aimlessly without looking round.]

NORA [Turning towards her.]

You're taking away the turf from the cake.

CATHLEEN [Crying out.]

The Son of God forgive us, Nora, we're after forgetting his bit of bread.

[She comes over to the fire.]

NORA And it's destroyed he'll be going till dark night, and he after eating nothing since the sun went up.

CATHLEEN [Turning the cake out of the oven.]

It's destroyed he'll be, surely. There's no sense left on any person in a house where an old woman will be talking for ever.

[Maurya sways herself on her stool.]

CATHLEEN [Cutting off some of the bread and rolling it in a cloth; to Maurya.]

Let you go down now to the spring well and give him this and he passing. You'll see him then and the dark word will be broken, and you can say "God speed you," the way he'll be easy in his mind.

MAURYA [Taking the bread.]

Will I be in it as soon as himself?

CATHLEEN If you go now quickly.

MAURYA [Standing up unsteadily.]

It's hard set I am to walk.

CATHLEEN [Looking at her anxiously.]

Give her the stick, Nora, or maybe she'll slip on the big stones.

NORA What stick?

CATHLEEN The stick Michael brought from Connemara.

MAURYA [Taking a stick Nora gives her.]

In the big world the old people do be leaving things after them for their sons and children, but in this place it is the young men do be leaving things behind for them that do be old.

[She goes out slowly. Nora goes over to the ladder.]

CATHLEEN Wait, Nora, maybe she'd turn back quickly. She's that sorry, God help her, you wouldn't know the thing she'd do.

NORA Is she gone round by the bush?

CATHLEEN [Looking out.]

She's gone now. Throw it down quickly, for the Lord knows when she'll be out of it again.

NORA [Getting the bundle from the loft.]

The young priest said he'd be passing to-morrow, and we might go down and speak to him below if it's Michael's they are surely.

CATHLEEN [Taking the bundle.]

Did he say what way they were found?

NORA [Coming down.]

"There were two men," says he, "and they rowing round with poteen before the cocks crowed, and the oar of one of them caught the body, and they passing the black cliffs of the north."

CATHLEEN [Trying to open the bundle.]

Give me a knife, Nora, the string's perished with the salt water, and there's a black knot on it you wouldn't loosen in a week.

NORA [Giving her a knife.]

I've heard tell it was a long way to Donegal.

CATHLEEN [Cutting the string.]

It is surely. There was a man in here a while ago--the man sold us that knife--and he said if you set off walking from the rocks beyond, it would be seven days you'd be in Donegal.

NORA And what time would a man take, and he floating?

[Cathleen opens the bundle and takes out a bit of a stocking. They look at them eagerly.]

CATHLEEN [In a low voice.]

The Lord spare us, Nora! isn't it a queer hard thing to say if it's his

they are surely?

NORA I'll get his shirt off the hook the way we can put the one flannel on the other [she looks through some clothes hanging in the corner.] It's not with them, Cathleen, and where will it be?

CATHLEEN I'm thinking Bartley put it on him in the morning, for his own shirt was heavy with the salt in it [pointing to the corner]. There's a bit of a sleeve was of the same stuff. Give me that and it will do.

[Nora brings it to her and they compare the flannel.]

CATHLEEN It's the same stuff, Nora; but if it is itself aren't there great rolls of it in the shops of Galway, and isn't it many another man may have a shirt of it as well as Michael himself?

NORA [Who has taken up the stocking and counted the stitches, crying out.]

It's Michael, Cathleen, it's Michael; God spare his soul, and what will herself say when she hears this story, and Bartley on the sea?

CATHLEEN [Taking the stocking.]

It's a plain stocking.

NORA It's the second one of the third pair I knitted, and I put up three score stitches, and I dropped four of them.

CATHLEEN [Counts the stitches.]

It's that number is in it [crying out.] Ah, Nora, isn't it a bitter thing to think of him floating that way to the far north, and no one to keen him but the black hags that do be flying on the sea?

NORA [Swinging herself round, and throwing out her arms on the clothes.]

And isn't it a pitiful thing when there is nothing left of a man who was a great rower and fisher, but a bit of an old shirt and a plain stocking?

CATHLEEN [After an instant.]

Tell me is herself coming, Nora? I hear a little sound on the path.

NORA [Looking out.]

She is, Cathleen. She's coming up to the door.

CATHLEEN Put these things away before she'll come in. Maybe it's easier she'll be after giving her blessing to Bartley, and we won't let on we've heard anything the time he's on the sea.

NORA [Helping Cathleen to close the bundle.]

We'll put them here in the corner.

[They put them into a hole in the chimney corner. Cathleen goes back to the spinning-wheel.]

NORA Will she see it was crying I was?

CATHLEEN Keep your back to the door the way the light'll not be on you.

[Nora sits down at the chimney corner, with her back to the door. Maurya comes in very slowly, without looking at the girls, and goes over to her stool at the other side of the fire. The cloth with the bread is still in her hand. The girls look at each other, and Nora points to the bundle of bread.]

CATHLEEN [After spinning for a moment.]

You didn't give him his bit of bread?

[Maurya begins to keen softly, without turning round.]

CATHLEEN Did you see him riding down?

[Maurya goes on keening.]

CATHLEEN [A little impatiently.]

God forgive you; isn't it a better thing to raise your voice and tell what you seen, than to be making lamentation for a thing that's done?
Did you see Bartley, I'm saying to you?

MAURYA [With a weak voice.]

My heart's broken from this day.

CATHLEEN [As before.]

Did you see Bartley?

MAURYA I seen the fearfulest thing.

CATHLEEN [Leaves her wheel and looks out.]

God forgive you; he's riding the mare now over the green head, and the gray pony behind him.

MAURYA [Starts, so that her shawl falls back from her head and shows her white tossed hair. With a frightened voice.]

The gray pony behind him.

CATHLEEN [Coming to the fire.]

What is it ails you, at all?

MAURYA [Speaking very slowly.]

I've seen the fearfulest thing any person has seen, since the day Bride Dara seen the dead man with the child in his arms.

CATHLEEN AND NORA UAH.

[They crouch down in front of the old woman at the fire.]

NORA Tell us what it is you seen.

MAURYA I went down to the spring well, and I stood there saying a prayer to myself. Then Bartley came along, and he riding on the red mare with the gray pony behind him [she puts up her hands, as if to hide something from her eyes.] The Son of God spare us, Nora!

CATHLEEN What is it you seen.

MAURYA I seen Michael himself.

CATHLEEN [Speaking softly.]

You did not, mother; it wasn't Michael you seen, for his body is after being found in the far north, and he's got a clean burial by the grace of God.

MAURYA [A little defiantly.]

I'm after seeing him this day, and he riding and galloping. Bartley came first on the red mare; and I tried to say "God speed you," but something choked the words in my throat. He went by quickly; and "the blessing of God on you," says he, and I could say nothing. I looked up then, and I crying, at the gray pony, and there was Michael upon it--with fine clothes on him, and new shoes on his feet.

CATHLEEN [Begins to keen.]

It's destroyed we are from this day. It's destroyed, surely.

NORA Didn't the young priest say the Almighty God wouldn't leave her destitute with no son living?

MAURYA [In a low voice, but clearly.]

It's little the like of him knows of the sea. . . . Bartley will be lost now, and let you call in Eamon and make me a good coffin out of the white boards, for I won't live after them. I've had a husband, and a husband's father, and six sons in this house--six fine men, though it was a hard birth I had with every one of them and they coming to the world--and some of them were found and some of them were not found, but they're gone now the lot of them. . . . There were Stephen, and Shawn, were lost in the great wind, and found after in the Bay of Gregory of the Golden Mouth, and carried up the two of them on the one plank, and in by that door.

[She pauses for a moment, the girls start as if they heard something through the door that is half open behind them.]

NORA [In a whisper.]

Did you hear that, Cathleen? Did you hear a noise in the north-east?

CATHLEEN [In a whisper.]

There's some one after crying out by the seashore.

MAURYA [Continues without hearing anything.]

There was Sheamus and his father, and his own father again, were lost in a dark night, and not a stick or sign was seen of them when the sun went up. There was Patch after was drowned out of a curagh that turned over. I was sitting here with Bartley, and he a baby, lying on my two knees, and I seen two women, and three women, and four women coming in, and they crossing themselves, and not saying a word. I looked out then, and there were men coming after them, and they holding a thing in the half of a red sail, and water dripping out of it--it was a dry day, Nora--and leaving a track to the door.

[She pauses again with her hand stretched out towards the door. It opens softly and old women begin to come in, crossing themselves on the threshold, and kneeling down in front of the stage with red petticoats over their heads.]

MAURYA [Half in a dream, to Cathleen.]

Is it Patch, or Michael, or what is it at all?

CATHLEEN Michael is after being found in the far north, and when he is found there how could he be here in this place?

MAURYA There does be a power of young men floating round in the sea, and what way would they know if it was Michael they had, or another man like him, for when a man is nine days in the sea, and the wind blowing, it's hard set his own mother would be to say what man was it.

CATHLEEN It's Michael, God spare him, for they're after sending us a bit of his clothes from the far north.

[She reaches out and hands Maurya the clothes that belonged to Michael. Maurya stands up slowly, and takes them into her hands. NORA looks out.]

NORA They're carrying a thing among them and there's water dripping out of it and leaving a track by the big stones.

CATHLEEN [In a whisper to the women who have come in.]

Is it Bartley it is?

ONE OF THE WOMEN It is surely, God rest his soul.

[Two younger women come in and pull out the table. Then men carry in the body of Bartley, laid on a plank, with a bit of a sail over it, and lay it on the table.]

CATHLEEN [To the women, as they are doing so.]

What way was he drowned?

ONE OF THE WOMEN The gray pony knocked him into the sea, and he was washed out where there is a great surf on the white rocks.

[Maurya has gone over and knelt down at the head of the table. The women are keening softly and swaying themselves with a slow movement. Cathleen and Nora kneel at the other end of the table. The men kneel near the door.]

MAURYA [Raising her head and speaking as if she did not see the people around her.]

They're all gone now, and there isn't anything more the sea can do to me.... I'll have no call now to be up crying and praying when the wind breaks from the south, and you can hear the surf is in the east, and the surf is in the west, making a great stir with the two noises, and they hitting one on the other. I'll have no call now to be going down and getting Holy Water in the dark nights after Samhain, and I won't care

what way the sea is when the other women will be keening. [To Nora]. Give me the Holy Water, Nora, there's a small sup still on the dresser.

[Nora gives it to her.]

MAURYA [Drops Michael's clothes across Bartley's feet, and sprinkles the Holy Water over him.]

It isn't that I haven't prayed for you, Bartley, to the Almighty God. It isn't that I haven't said prayers in the dark night till you wouldn't know what I'd be saying; but it's a great rest I'll have now, and it's time surely. It's a great rest I'll have now, and great sleeping in the long nights after Samhain, if it's only a bit of wet flour we do have to eat, and maybe a fish that would be stinking.

[She kneels down again, crossing herself, and saying prayers under her breath.]

CATHLEEN [To an old man.]

Maybe yourself and Eamon would make a coffin when the sun rises. We have fine white boards herself bought, God help her, thinking Michael would be found, and I have a new cake you can eat while you'll be working.

THE OLD MAN [Looking at the boards.]

Are there nails with them?

CATHLEEN There are not, Colum; we didn't think of the nails.

ANOTHER MAN It's a great wonder she wouldn't think of the nails, and all the coffins she's seen made already.

CATHLEEN It's getting old she is, and broken.

[Maurya stands up again very slowly and spreads out the pieces of Michael's clothes beside the body, sprinkling them with the last of the Holy Water.]

NORA [In a whisper to Cathleen.]

She's quiet now and easy; but the day Michael was drowned you could hear her crying out from this to the spring well. It's fonder she was of Michael, and would any one have thought that?

CATHLEEN [Slowly and clearly.]

An old woman will be soon tired with anything she will do, and isn't it nine days herself is after crying and keening, and making great sorrow

in the house?

MAURYA [Puts the empty cup mouth downwards on the table, and lays her hands together on Bartley's feet.]

They're all together this time, and the end is come. May the Almighty God have mercy on Bartley's soul, and on Michael's soul, and on the souls of Sheamus and Patch, and Stephen and Shawn (bending her head); and may He have mercy on my soul, Nora, and on the soul of every one is left living in the world.

[She pauses, and the keen rises a little more loudly from the women, then sinks away.]

MAURYA [Continuing.]

Michael has a clean burial in the far north, by the grace of the Almighty God. Bartley will have a fine coffin out of the white boards, and a deep grave surely. What more can we want than that? No man at all can be living for ever, and we must be satisfied.

[She kneels down again and the curtain falls slowly.]

ON A REJECTED NOSEGAY,
OFFERED BY THE AUTHOR TO
A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG LADY,
WHO RETURNED IT.

PUNCH.

What! then you won't accept it, wont you? Oh!
No matter; pshaw! my heart is breaking, though.
My bouquet is rejected; let it be:
For what am I to you, or you to me?
'Tis true I once had hoped; but now, alas!
Well, well; 'tis over now, and let it pass.
I was a fool--perchance I am so still;
You won't accept it! Let me dream you will:
But that were idle. Shall we meet again?
Why should we? Water for my burning brain?
I could have loved thee--Could! I love thee yet
Can only Lethe teach me to forget?
Oblivion's balm, oh tell me where to find!
Is it a tenant of the anguish'd mind?
Or is it?--ha! at last I see it come;

Waiter! a bottle of your oldest rum.

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by James Parton

LIFE IN LACONICS

by Mary Mapes Dodge

Given a roof, and a taste for rations,
And you have the key to the "wealth of nations."

Given a boy, a tree, and a hatchet,
And virtue strives in vain to match it.

Given a pair, a snake, and an apple,
You make the whole world need a chapel.

Given "no cards," broad views, and a hovel,
You have a realistic novel.

Given symptoms and doctors with potion and pill,
And your heirs will ere long be contesting your will.

That good leads to evil there's no denying:
If it were not for truth there would be no lying.

"I'm nobody!" should have a hearse;
But then, "I'm somebody!" is worse.

"Folks say," et cetera! Well, they shouldn't,
And if they knew you well, they wouldn't.

When you coddle your life, all its vigor and grace
Shrink away with the whisper, "We're in the wrong place."

ON KNOWING WHEN TO STOP

by L. J. Bridgman

The woodchuck told it all about.

"I'm going to build a dwelling
Six stories high, up to the sky!"

He never tired of telling.

He dug the cellar smooth and well

But made no more advances;

That lovely hole so pleased his soul

And satisfied his fancies.

—

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